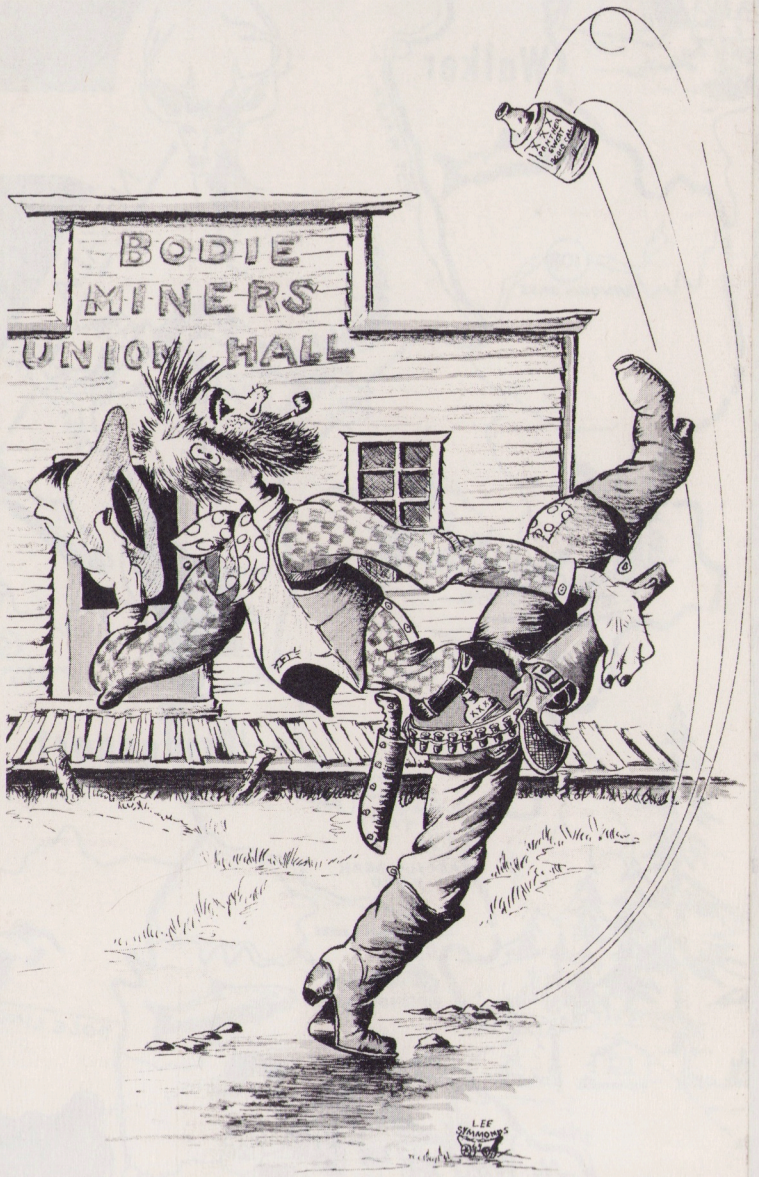
BODIE
State Historic Park

THE BADMAN FROM BODIE



Off the Beaten Path...

You will find yourself in Nevada, Silver Trails Territory as you travel along highway 95. Mineral County is home to ghost towns and ghost mining camps. Some of the most famous are Aurora in the west, Berlin in the east and Candellaria and Belleville in the south.

If off roading is your thing, then Mineral County is the place for you. With Nearly 1,000 miles of open roads and trails. Visit the Old Stage Coach Stop at Fletcher or the ghost mining camp at Poinsettia. When it comes to ATV or OHV we have the "DIRT" that can give you a thrill!

Not an off-road enthusiast? No problem! There is still so much to do in Mineral County. Play a round of golf at the Walker Lake Golf Course, visit the Ordinance Museum centrally located in Hawthorne "America's Patriotic Home", tour Mineral County Museum for a historic perspective of the county, rev up your engines at the Hawthorne Speedway or relax and enjoy an evening of dining and play at the local casinos.

TRAVELNEVADA

VIC TRUJILLO

NV SILVER TRAILS TERRITORY

LAKE TOWNSEND

CELL PHONE AND INTERNET SERVICE CAN BE LIMITED OR NON-EXISTENT

TRAVEL AT OWN RISK

STAY ON EXISTING ROADS AND TRAILS

Access to Adventure

Mineral County is Nevada's gateway to adventure in California. From Hawthorne via highway 359 you will find access to highway 395 and:

Bodie Ghost Town
Mono Lake (Tuffa Towers)
Lee Vining
Yosemite
Mammoth Lakes
Bishop
Bridgeport

MAP LEGEND

- Ghost Mine/Town/Camp
- Campgrounds
- Main Highway
- Highway
- Primarily Dirt Road
- OHV Trail
- Dirt Trail for Emergency Only
- 4-Wheel Drive High Clearance with Professional Map Atlas Only

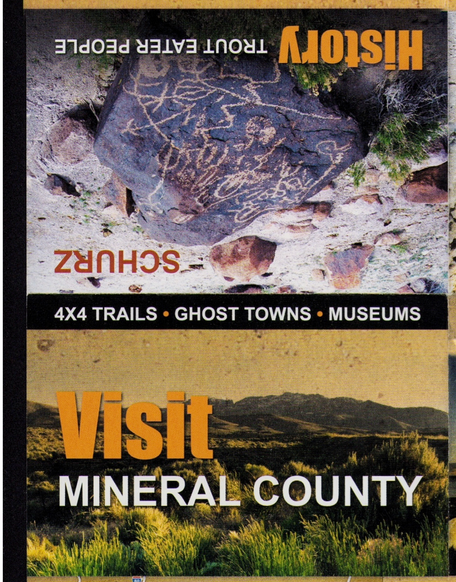
NEVADA A WORLD WITHIN. A STATE APART.

VisitMineralCounty.com

ROADS AND TRAILS TRAVEL THROUGH PUBLIC AND PRIVATE LAND. PLEASE OBEY ALL POSTED SIGNS.

4 Wheel Drive is generally recommended for any dirt road driving. Please note most of these Roads, OHV/ATV Trails / Routes are dirt roads/trails. Most are not maintained. Note that any dirt road may change in condition at any time especially during and after inclement weather. Be sure to take plenty of water, a cell phone/extra battery, blankets, and shovel at a minimum when traveling on dirt roads/trails. Stay on trails / roads, no water is available on these trails.

No warranty is made by Mineral County as to the accuracy, reliability, or completeness of these maps.This information may not meet National Map Accuracy Standards.

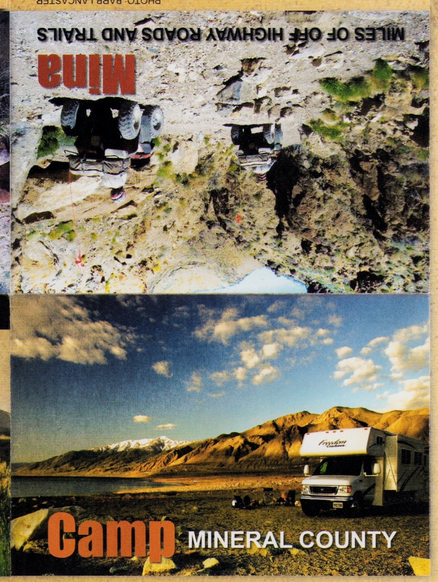


MINERAL COUNTY & THE TOWN OF HAWTHORNE

Serving as the ideal "launching pad" for all of your activities during your stay, the town of Hawthorne is located at the center of Mineral County. Hawthorne sits about 40 miles east of the California-Nevada border where Highway 359 and Highway 95 meet.

Hawthorne Convention Center & 1942 USO Building
950 "E" Street (Main Street)
Hawthorne, NV 89415

NEVADA A WORLD WITHIN. A STATE APART.
TRAVELNEVADA.COM
VisitMineralCounty.com



Discover Beautiful Mineral County

BARBARA LANCASTER

Mineral County is surrounded by spectacular mountains and stark desert. The area offers ghost towns, 4x4 & OHV roads/trails, golfing, a newly renovated airport, RV parks, casinos, campgrounds, motels and much more!

In the heart of Mineral County is Walker Lake, with miles of sandy beaches providing access to non-motorized boating, wind sailing, and camping. In prehistoric times, it was part of Lake Lahontan that covered much of the state.

Don't miss the historic 1942 Hawthorne USO Building. One of over 400 USO Kit buildings from 1942, it remains as one of the last few left in the country. The Hawthorne Convention Center and Courage Theater serves locals and tourists alike for private and corporate events. So if you are hosting a convention, wedding, reunion or need a place to meet, please consider the USO building. For more information please visit us at:

VisitMineralCounty.com

PHOTO: BARB LANCASTER

From downtown Mina, hundreds of miles of off-highway roads and trails can be reached. Ghost towns and old mining camps are waiting to be explored. Wild burros, wild horses, antelope and big horn sheep may be seen as you hit the trails. Petroglyphs, fossilized seashells and interesting mineral samples can be seen. These are day trips and due to the rugged nature of trails 4WD and high clearance vehicles are always recommended. Mina is ATV friendly, but since it is in a rural part of the County, approximately 33 miles from any fuel or groceries, make sure to bring plenty with you.

TRAVELNEVADA

BETTY EASLEY

Don't miss our ghost towns and mining camps:

MARIETTA

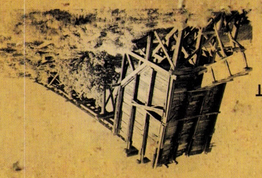
OMCO

ATHENS DISTRICT

SIMON MINING DISTRICT

GARFIELD MILL SITE

GILBERT MINING CAMP



The state of Nevada is rich with American Indian culture both past and present. Here in Mineral County the Paiute Tribe is the most predominant. Of special interest are the ancient artifacts from the "Agai Ducutta Numa" also known as "The Trout Eater People" of the Paiute Tribe that once lived along the shores of Walker Lake. Important artifacts can be seen at the Cultural Center in Schurz.

On the third weekend of September the Paiute Tribe of Schurz welcomes tribes from all over the country and the general public to enjoy their most sacred Pine Nut Festival. Pine nuts were a staple of the Paiute diet. The festival pays homage to the Tribes people and heritage. It is a sacred celebration and blessing that honors their ancestors. It also preserves native traditions through the pow-wow, hand games and dances.

Please call ahead for availability, **775-773-2306**.

Walker Lake

1 Wild Horse Viewing Area
2 Cliff House Road Visitor Info
3 Bighorn Viewing Area
4 Monument Beach
5 Bighorn Viewing Area
6 Scenic Overlook
7 Sportsman's Beach (BLM)
8 Tamarack Beach (BLM)
9 Twenty Mile Beach (BLM)
10 Reese River Canyon
11 Mount Grant

BETTY EASLEY

TRAVELNEVADA

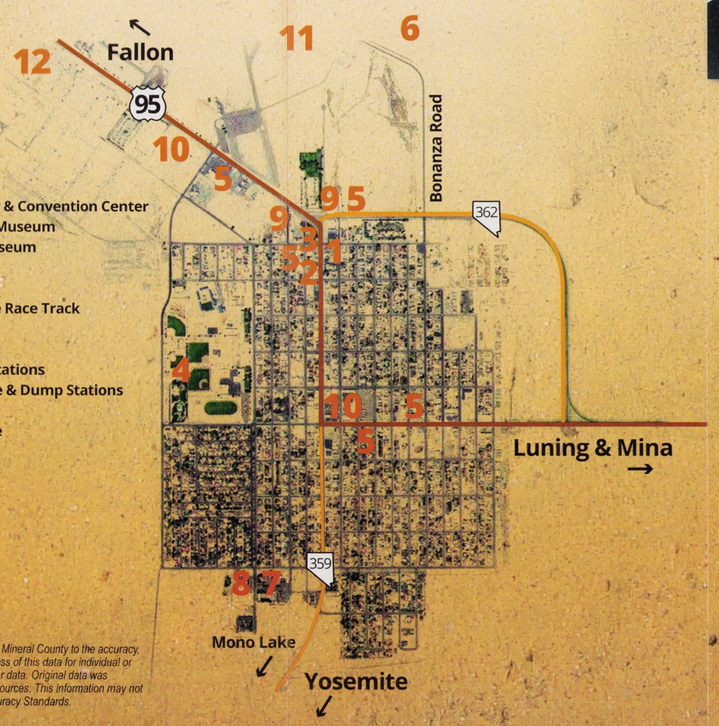
TRAVELNEVADA

TRAVELNEVADA

Welcome, Your Adventure Awaits You

Mineral County roads and trails will offer you a rewarding experience.

KNOW BEFORE YOU GO
All roads are subject to change due to maintenance and weather.
Check on latest trail road conditions before you travel.



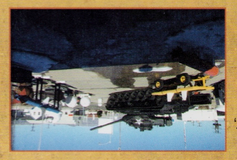
1 USO Visitor & Convention Center
2 Ordnance Museum
3 County Museum
4 Parks
5 Gas
6 Hawthorne Race Track
7 Library
8 Hospital
9 Charging Stations
10 RV Propane & Dump Stations
11 Airport
12 Golf Course

No warranty is made by Mineral County to the accuracy, reliability, or completeness of this data for individual or aggregate use with other data. Original data was compiled from various sources. This information may not meet National Map Accuracy Standards.

PHOTO: SYDNEY MARTINEZ/TRAVELNEVADA

The Mineral County Ordnance Museum commemorates the military and civilian personnel that have made significant contributions and even the ultimate sacrifice in service to our great nation. The museum documents the history of support created at the Hawthorne Ammunition Depot. With over 1000 military items on display, there is something of interest to museum goers of all ages. Climb on our Patton M47 Tank or take a selfie with a bazooka while sitting in a M151 MUTT Vietnam era Jeep.

If you would like to schedule a special tour, please call **775-945-5400**.



FREE Admission

925 E Street • Hawthorne, Nevada
Monday–Friday • 10am–4pm
Saturday • 10am–2pm
www.HawthorneOrdnanceMuseum.com

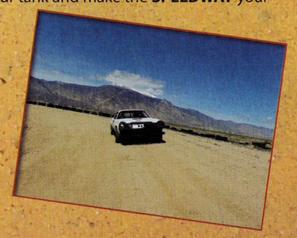
Hawthorne Speedway will have food, music and fun!

Hawthorne Speedway is a quarter mile, sticky oval dirt track with an adjacent one-mile motocross track. These two highly rated tracks will **"REV UP"** your need for speed.

With the grand re-opening, American Dirt Track racing is alive, well and roaring in Hawthorne.

Bring your family and friends out for night and day races.

All **"PISTON HEADS"** young and old are welcome. So fill up your tank and make the **SPEEDWAY** your **Pit Stop**.



For more information, see **Facebook, Hawthorne Speedway**.

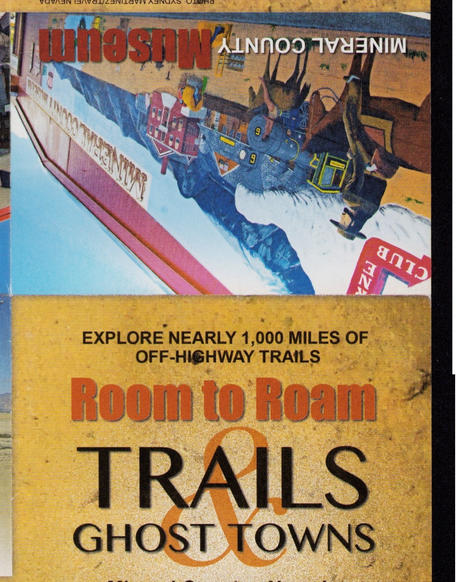


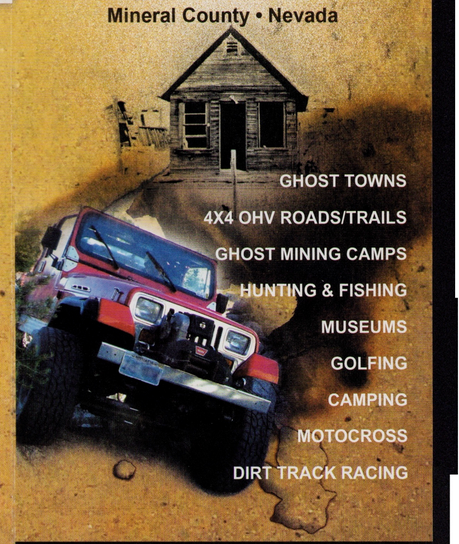
PHOTO: SYDNEY MARTINEZ/TRAVELNEVADA

The history of Mineral County reaches far back in time. Boom towns like Aurora first brought the county (then Esmeralda County) to the forefront and in 1860 its population topped 5,000 at the height of its boom. Nearby Bodie, California boomed from 1878 to 1883, bringing new life back to Aurora. Hawthorne was established in 1881 by the Carson and Colorado narrow-gauge railroad and became the commerce center of the county. Its importance in world events was solidified with the establishment of the Hawthorne Naval Ammunition Depot in 1930.

Please come visit and enjoy our variety of displays that include early mining equipment, a pharmacy from the early 1900's, horse drawn vehicles, railroad artifacts, a 1930's fire engine and early hose cars, photographs of early mining camps, Nevada wildlife, samples of Victorian furniture and clothing, early photographic equipment, an extensive sampling of minerals and semi-precious stones.

FREE Admission

775-945-5142
400 Tenth Street • Hawthorne, Nevada
Tuesday–Saturday • 12pm–4pm
www.web2.greatbasin.net/~mcmuseum/



NEVADA A WORLD WITHIN. A STATE APART.
VisitMineralCounty.com

PHOTOS: **(Cover)** Early summer bloom, Dry Lakes Plateau
(Upper) Sunrise near the Paramount mine site
(Middle) Hiking on the Dry Lakes Plateau
(Lower) Aspens in Bodie Hills

The Bodie Hills Conservation Partnership

seeks to permanently preserve the natural, cultural and recreational values of this special region. The Bodie Hills deserve long-term protection from a potential open-pit gold mine and other industrial activity that scars the land, harms our clean air and water, and limits visitor opportunities. Visit **www.bodiehills.org** to learn more about this American Treasure and how you can help.

BODIE HILLS
CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIP

For more information please visit
www.bodiehills.org

All photos courtesy John Dittli, johndittli.com
Brochure and website design by nilsdavisdesign.com

Printed on 100% recycled content, 50% post-consumer waste, processed chlorine-free paper. greenerprinter.com

the Bodie Hills

An American Treasure

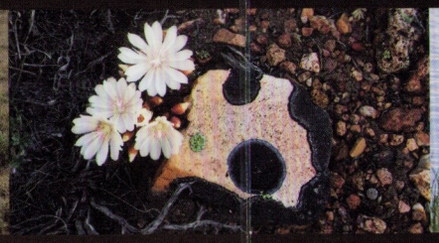
The Bodie Hills, where the Sierra Nevada mountains and the Great Basin desert meet, are one of the most beautiful corners of California's Eastern Sierra region. The public lands of the Bodie Hills form the scenic backdrop to Bodie State Historic Park, Mono Lake and the Bridgeport Valley, and are an authentic wild-west destination. Visitors can find unique opportunities to connect with nature and with our past: spectacular vistas, sweeping high-altitude plateaus, historic sites and abundant wildlife.

the Bodie Hills

PHOTOS: (Left to Right) Pronghorn antelope, Bitterroot blossoms & lichen, American Avocet
(Below) Beauty Peak sunset, Dry Lakes Plateau

Nature

The Bodie Hills are home to a vast array of plants and animals, from mule deer and black bear to lodgepole pine and juniper. Herds of pronghorn antelope roam here. Sage grouse strut through meadows. Ephemeral wetlands attract migrating shorebirds and waterfowl in the spring. Incredible wildflower displays grace hillsides and meadows in summer, and aspen stands turn gold in fall.



History & Culture

People lived in these hills long before William S. Bodey came to the area in 1859 in search of gold, which he found. His discovery led to the establishment of a boomtown that went bust in less than a decade: Bodie, now one of California's most beloved state parks and a designated National Historic Landmark District. Remnants of past mining activity are scattered throughout the Bodie Hills. The area contains a rich archeological record and remains important to Native Americans today.

Recreation

Hike 10,174-foot Bodie Mountain. Photograph a carpet of wildflowers. Drive back roads in search of history. Ride a mountain bike or on horseback, where antelope set the pace. Ski or ride untracked snow with a Sierra backdrop. Hunt trophy mule deer. Camp in an aspen grove. The Bodie Hills offer one-of-a-kind recreational opportunities and a great escape for all.

PHOTOS: (Upper Left) Exploring a field of white lupine
(Lower Left) Bodie State Historic Park

California's Eastern Sierra

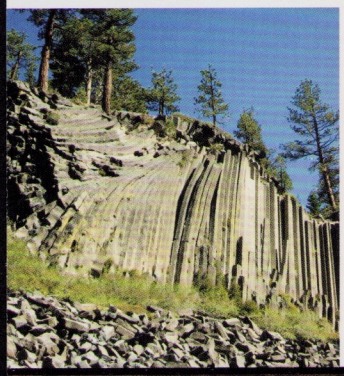
MUST-SEE MONO COUNTY

BODIE STATE HISTORIC PARK

The West's largest un-restored and best-preserved ghost town.

The historic gold mining town of Bodie - one of the richest gold strikes in California - swelled to a population of almost 10,000 in its heyday. Now, memories of the wild and lawless mining days come alive on Bodie's long-abandoned dirt streets.

DON'T MISS **FRIENDS OF BODIE DAY** ON AUGUST 13!



MONO LAKE

A hauntingly beautiful alkaline inland sea adorned with mystical-looking limestone tufa towers.

DEVILS POSTPILE NATIONAL MONUMENT

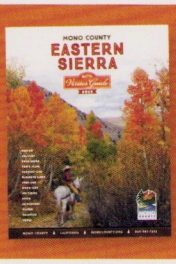
One of the world's finest examples of rare columnar basalt formations, stretching 60 feet high.

MONOCOUNTY.ORG 800-845-7922

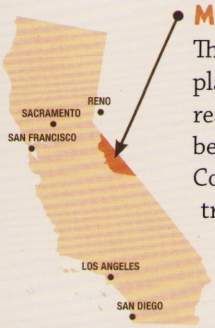
MONO COUNTY EVENTS

SUMMER AND FALL 2016

JULY 29-30	Bridgeport Fish Fest – *Bridgeport*
JULY 29-31	June Lake Loop Mountain Music Festival – *June Lake*
JULY 30	Kids Fishing Festival – *Mammoth Lakes*
AUG 7-9	Size Doesn't Matter Fishing Derby – *Walker/Coleville*
AUG 13	Friends of Bodie Day – *Bodie State Historic Park*
SEPT 2-5	Bridgeport Founder's Day Celebration – *Bridgeport*
SEPT 9	Graniteman Swim Challenge – *June Lake*
SEPT 10	Mammoth Gran Fondo – *Mammoth Lakes*
SEPT 10	June Lake Jam Fest – *June Lake*
SEPT 10-11	Birding the Valley – *Walker/Coleville*
SEPT 11	Tioga Pass Run – *Lee Vining*
SEPT 16-OCT 16	Eastern Sierra Fall Festival – *Eastern Sierra-wide*
SEPT 17-18	Eastern Sierra Kite Festival – *Walker/Coleville*
SEPT 23-25	Oktoberfest – *Mammoth Lakes*
OCT 14-16	Inspired by Nature: A Writer's Retreat – *June Lake*



FOR MORE INFORMATION, REQUEST A FREE VISITOR GUIDE AT MONOCOUNTY.ORG OR 800-845-7922

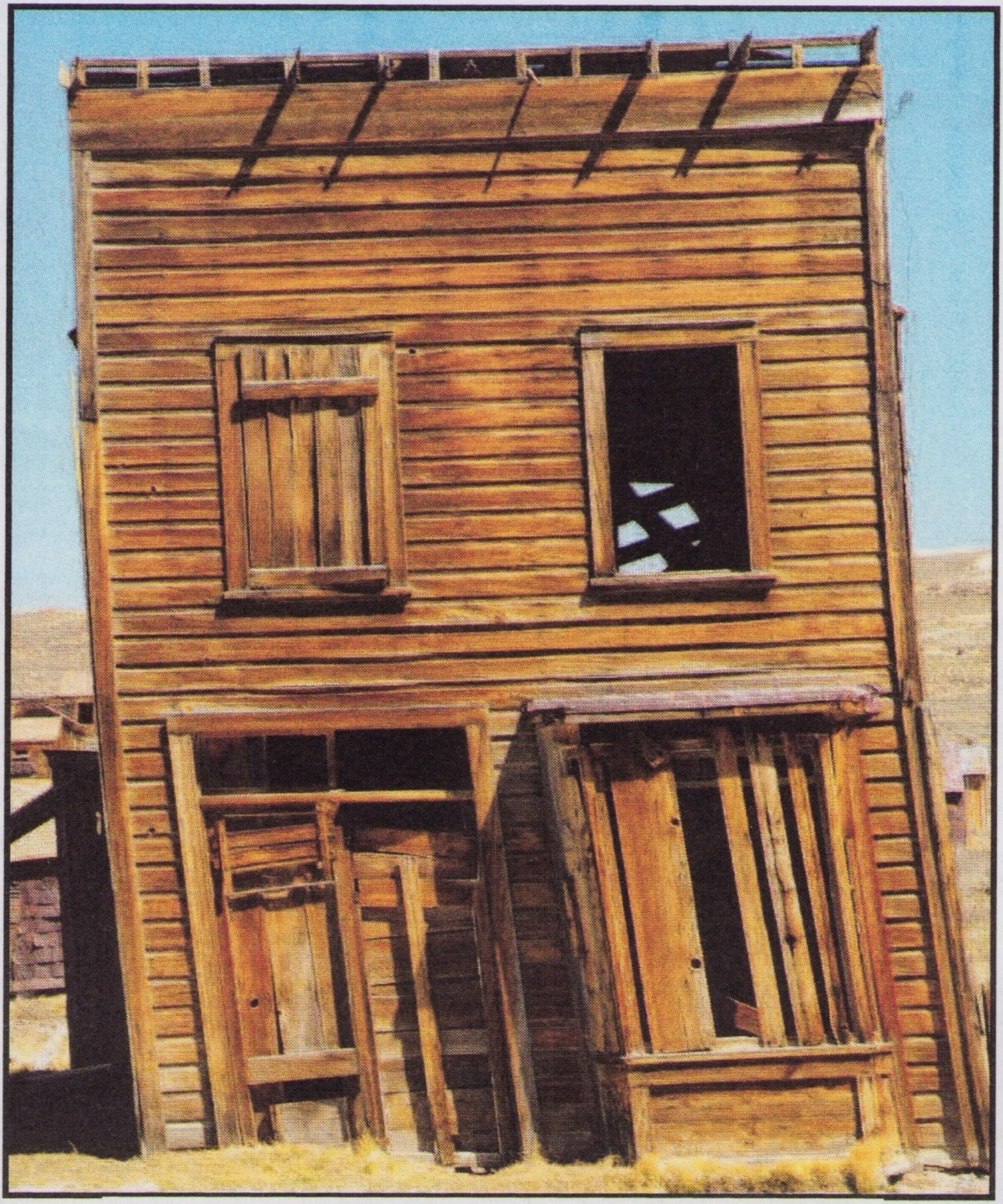


MONO COUNTY

The Eastern Sierra's vast playground is an easily reached destination and beckons visitors in all seasons. Countless side-roads, hiking trails, fishing holes, and quaint mountain villages are here for you to explore!

MONO COUNTY CALIFORNIA

MONOCOUNTY.ORG 800-845-7922



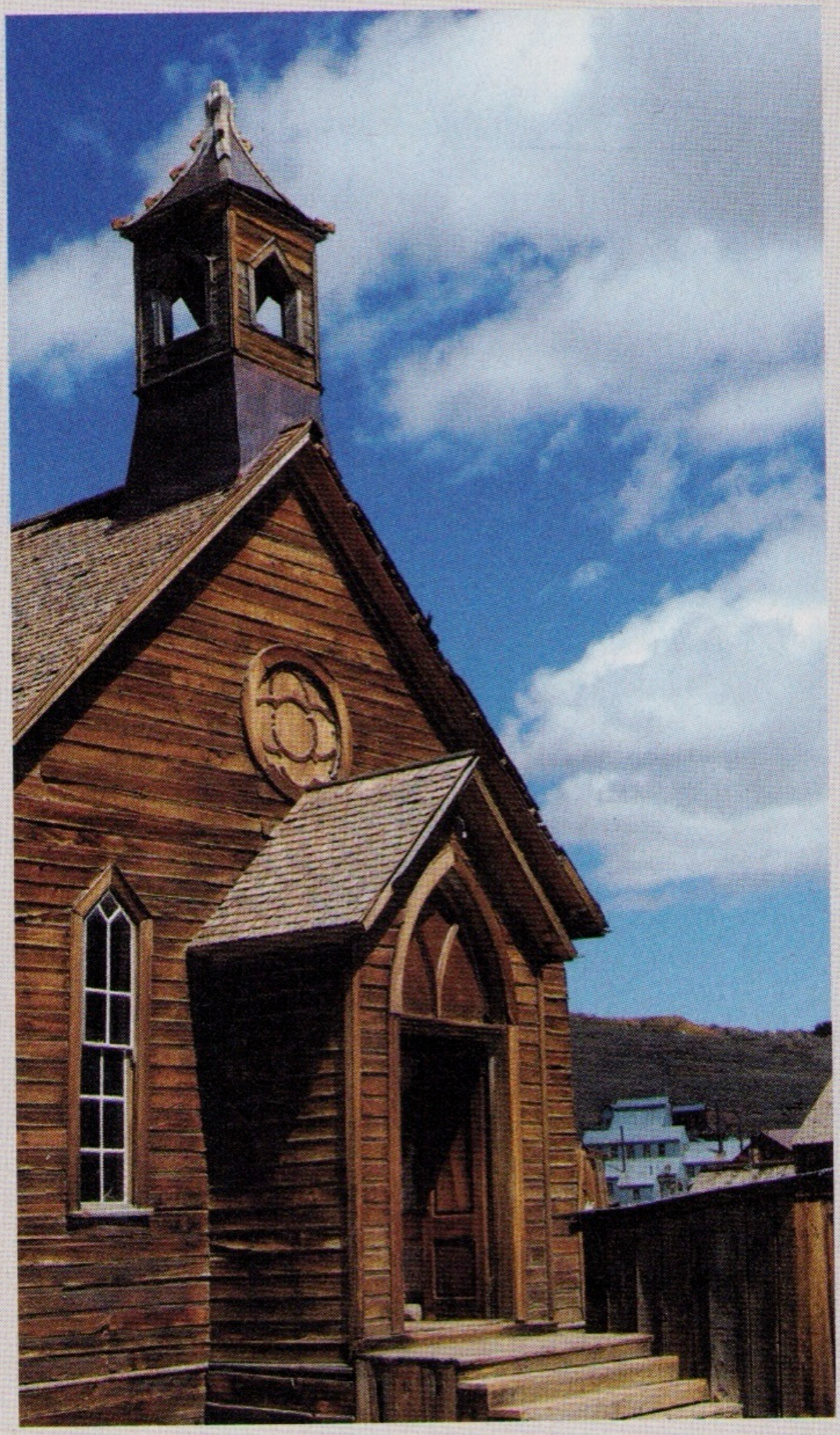
BODIE STATE
HISTORIC PARK
P.O. BOX 515
BRIDGEPORT, CA 93517
(760) 647-6445
THANK YOU

DATE 08/20/2012 MON TIME 09:09

ADULT DAY USE		$5.00
BODIE PRES.		$2.00
TOTAL		$7.00
CASH		$20.00
CHANGE		$13.00
CLERK 1	169332	00000

LONDIE G. PADELSKY

Once a booming gold rush town of more than 10,000 residents, Bodie's 170 remaining structures today stand in a state of "arrested decay." The state park is considered to be one of the best preserved ghost towns in the West.



"the SHEET"

Vol. 17, No. 34

THERE'S GOLD IN THEM HILLS!

8-24-2019

Application to mine the Bodie Hills causes backlash

By Page and Hite

A recent proposal by Radius Gold, a Canadian mining company, to explore mining potential in Mono county has local conservation groups up in arms.

The proposal aims to drill for gold and silver in Bodie Hills with possible negative effects on the nearby Dry Lakes plateau and Rough Creek drainage. According to Jora Fogg of Friends of the Inyo, "Rough Creek, a major tributary to the Walker River, is directly adjacent to the drilling site. The area contains a rock layer known as Cinnabar which contains Sulfate, an acid producing compound, so we are concerned there could be a significant risk of acid mine drainage"

The Radius Gold company, headquartered in Vancouver, British Columbia, filed a pre-application on July 20 with the Mono County Community Development Department for a mineral exploration project, "to determine if there are valuable minerals on State Lease Land".

The pre-application has the possibility of carrying a stimulus to Inyo county. Doug Murray, a field geologist for Radius Gold, said that they try to keep a small crew to reduce impact, and all non-specialized

see BODIE, page 7

"A Cold One Please" – The bar at the Dechambeau Hotel in Bodie, CA.

Mules haul wood to the booming mining town of Bodie in the early 1900s.

Eastern Sierra History

ELECTRICITY FOR BODIE

By Dave Babb

While most of us are familiar with the story - - many of today's visitors to the ghost town of Bodie are surprised to learn that Bodie really had electricity way back in the 1890's. Actually, Bodie was the very first place known to use electricity brought in over long-distance power lines.

In 1892, Thomas Leggett, Superintendent of the Standard Consolidated Mining Company, noted that the Standard Mill alone used nearly 50 cords of wood per day, and the total consumption in Bodie approached 5 billion board feet of lumber each year. He was convinced that electric power could be transmitted over wires and used many miles from its source. That source, could be the waters of Sierra streams.

Leggett, along with James Cain, a major stockholder in the Standard Mine, began construction of a hydroelectric power plant on Green Creek - - 8 miles south of Bridgeport and 13 miles from Bodie. The switches were thrown at noon one October day in 1893, and the lights came on in a few select businesses in Bodie.

So little was known about electricity in those days that the transmission lines were constructed with no curves or angles - - for fear that the electricity would jump off the line if it were not perfectly straight.

BODIE

continued from page 1

work will be sourced locally. According to the application, "Drill crews will consist of two to four man crews, with drill operations consisting of two, 12 hour shifts per day."

In 2009, Cougar Gold LLC spent $7 million on exploratory work to mine in the Bodie Hills area. They decided not to move forward with additional work (full-scale mining efforts) until Bodie Hills was released from Wilderness Study Area (WSA) status. Currently, Bodie Hills remains classified as a Wilderness Study Area.

When asked why their project was different, Murray pointed to money and resources. "We're helicopter based and we fly things (equipment) in. This is intended to keep impact at minimum." He also explained that Radius is willing to spend more money if it means reducing environmental impact.

This won't stop Friends of the Inyo. As Jora Fogg's update reads, "we have fought this battle before and won with our community coming together in opposition" and in an email to the Sheet, Fogg wrote, "Bodie has an incredibly rich historical legacy of mining that we want to honor and respect as part of our heritage. However, today's modern industry mining is extremely destructive to the environment exemplified by cases all over the western United States"

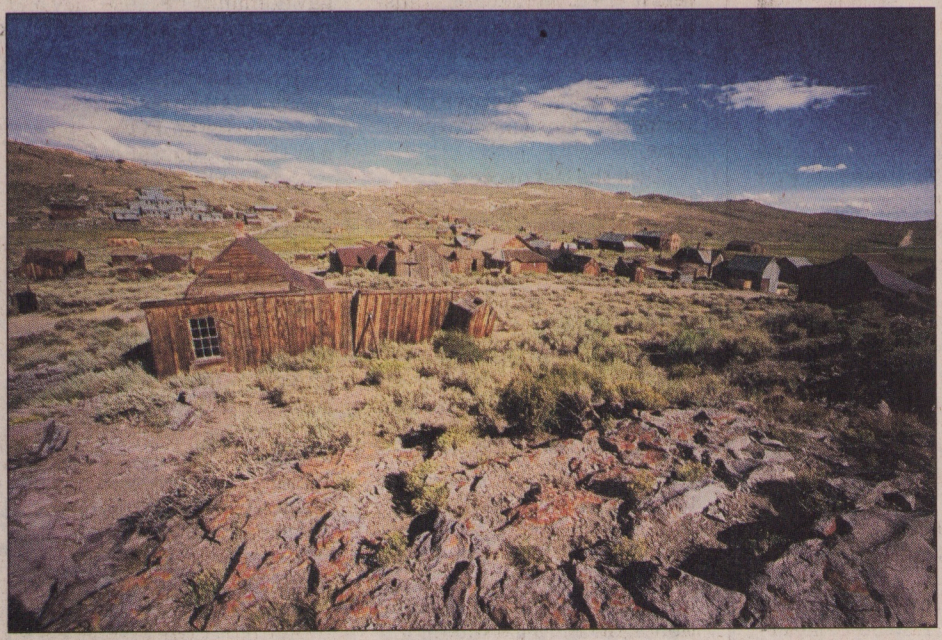
The program proposed by Radius involves flying a drill to nine separate sites and drilling holes to an average of 1,000 ft. Radius amounts the "disturbance" of the project to "approximately 0.1 acre per drill site for a total disturbance of 0.9 acre". Radius also cites historic mining activity in the area and notes that "The parcel is not suitable for agriculture".

Radius' application also notes that, "it is unknown if there are cultural sites or sensitive biological resources within the parcel". According to Fogg, "Details will come," and right now it's all speculation.

Radius states that the water for the project will either be sourced locally or pumped from the Humboldt Pit Lake near Aurora, Nevada, on lands owned by the Hecla Mining Company.

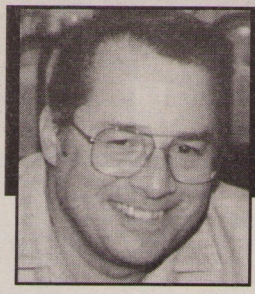
The Great Basin Resource Watch details the hazards of pit lakes in Nevada, citing the example of the Lone Tree Mine in Humboldt County which has the potential to remain toxic for hundreds of years. There are no standards for pit lake waters in Nevada, says the Nevada Division of Environmental Protection.

Collapsed building, Bodie, Calif.



Overview, Bodie, Calif.

Good Times – An old piano and roulette table in Sam Leon's bar in Bodie, CA.



Eastern Sierra History

THE MYSTERY OF BODY'S BURIAL

By Dave Babb

Aug. 2012

As most already know, America's most well preserved ghost town is called Bodie because of a spelling error. Gold was originally mined in the area in 1859 by a pair of prospectors, E. S. "Black" Taylor and Watterman S. Body - - that's B-O-D-Y. Body died in a blizzard in the winter of '59.

The Body Mining District was formed in 1861 and in less than 20 years the region produced some $21 million in gold and the town grew to about 12,000 residents. It seems that a painter hired to paint a sign for the public livery stables mistakenly added an "E" to the name, making it B-O-D-E-Y. Later, to assure proper pronunciation, the spelling was altered to B-O-D-I-E, as it remains today.

Back to that fateful day in 1859. Body and Taylor were returning to their cabin when, about two miles from home, Body said he was exhausted and decided to sit a spell while Taylor went on ahead. It was snowing heavily so Body sought shelter under a bluff of rocks. After a few hours, Taylor became concerned and went in search of his partner - - with no success. The following February, Taylor finally found Body's body, wrapped in a blanket, in the shelter that had been covered by a snow drift. Taylor removed the body about 200 feet onto flat ground and buried it. He made a monument with several large rocks.

For several years after his death, the exact site of Body's burial was unclear. Some claimed he was buried down near Mono Lake, while others insisted he was buried in the hills west of town - - but no one could provide any details and Taylor was not around. In 1871, a Judge Mcclinton was on his way to Bodie and passed by the rock monument. He supposed it to be someone's grave site, but Body's death and burial never crossed his mind and he didn't report what he had seen.

Then, in October of 1879, the Inyo Independent reported that "The mystery as to the death and burial of W. S. Body has been at last cleared up". While Mr. Wasson was attempting to document the true history of Mono County, he happened to mention the mystery of Body's burial during a conversation with Judge McClinton.

The Judge led a search party to the site of the rock monument, and after digging down about 3 feet, several items of Body'sclothing were found, along with bones and a large knife in a sheath known to many as having belonged to Body. The mystery had finally been solved - - and the knife was presented to the Pioneer Society.

Bodie State Historic Park rests in a state of arrested decay.

Throwback Thursday

Bodie - the thriving metropolis

Photo of Bodie, California, in 1880, when it was a booming gold-mining town. From 1877 to 1882, Bodie was a bustling town with more than 10,000 residents and produced more than $35 million in gold and silver. Now a state historic park in California's Bodie Hills, near the Nevada border, this 19th-century ghost town encompasses numerous original buildings in varying states of decay, plus artifacts and the Masonic Cemetery. Miners Union Hall houses a museum with mining tools. Northeast is the Standard Gold Mill, with machinery and information about the process of gold extraction.

Photo courtesy Eastern California Museum

BODIE, CALIFORNIA, as seen from the cemetery. This once famous mining town is today a small aggregation of old buildings and shacks clustered below the great mill and mines that set on Bodie Bluff. The mineral belt extends for over 2½ miles in the Bluff above the town. It is said that over 80,000,000 dollars was taken out of the Bodie mines. Wm. S. Bodie, after whom the town was named, found gold here in 1859. Gold was first discovered in the Mono region in 1852 when the Mono trail was blazed, but in 1864 Sonora Pass wagon road was opened. Most of the town was destroyed by the fire of June 24, 1932 . . M.P.

Photo-Color by Merle Porter

Published by Royal Pictures — Colton, California

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Golden Promises, Abandoned Dreams

A Brief History and Portfolio of Photographs of Bodie, California

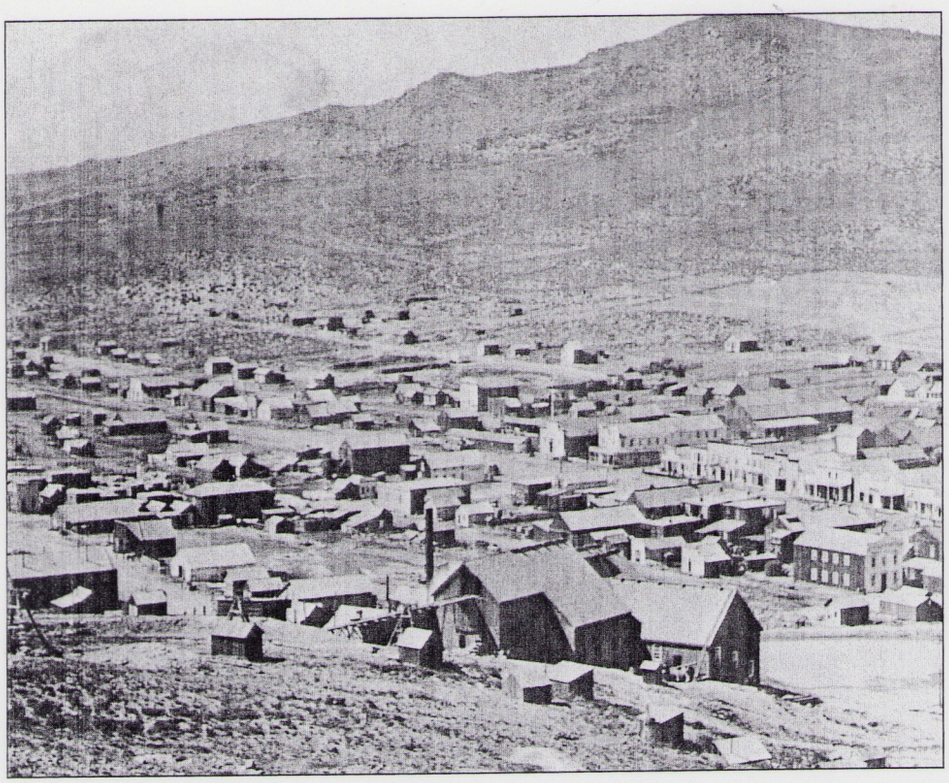
by Jill A. Lachman

Bodie, California. In the nineteenth century the name alone conjured up visions of one of the wildest mining camps in the West. Now preserved by its isolation and state historic park status, Bodie stands as a memorial to days gone by and as an icon of our cultural past.

Within a decade after the initial excitement of the discovery of gold in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada, the precious metal began to be depleted, thus disappointing the miners who had left friend and family in their frenzied search for gold. At word of rich strikes on the eastern slopes of the Sierra, "gold fever" drove these men to undertake the arduous journey over those mountains.

One such man was W.S. Bodey. A native of Poughkeepsie, New York, Bodey spent eleven years of his life searching for the claim that would make him rich. His journey actually began in 1848 with a trip from Poughkeepsie around the Horn on the sloop *Matthew Vassar* in order to seek his fortune in the California gold fields. Like many others, he abandoned his trade, tinsmithing, and left behind a wife and six children. Paydirt eluded him in the areas of Oakflat and Humbug, California, so in 1859 he struck out with a small company of men to stake a claim on the eastern side of the Sierra. Their journey led them to the area around what we now call Mono Lake. When he and his party arrived, few claims were free in the areas of Dogtown and Monoville, and they decided to prospect in the hills not far from Mono Lake. Bodey knew from his mining experience that the surrounding topography looked promising: it was mineralized quartz-type rock, which, if a miner were lucky, held gold and silver. Bodey's discovery of placer gold was a fluke, and the party concluded that they would have to do some digging if they were to reap the benefits of this claim.

With winter approaching, Bodey and one partner, E.S. Taylor, decided to build a cabin and wait until spring to develop the claim. On a supply trip back to their cabin they were caught in a sudden snowstorm, not uncommon in late fall, and Bodey collapsed from fatigue. It is said that Taylor, known as "Little Black" due to his being half Indian, tried unsuccessfully to carry Bodey. He raced back to their cabin with the supply-laden mules and then returned alone to brave the blizzard conditions in order to locate his partner. The raging storm had covered his tracks, as well as Bodey, and even the marker left by Little Black. Bodey's body was recovered the following spring, and he was laid to rest in a poorly marked grave. The mining district that grew up around his gold strike was named in his honor, with the spelling altered to "Bodie" during the "boom" years.



This historic photo shows Bodie in 1880, at the peak of its development. *Courtesy Jill A. Lachman and the Larry Poag Collection.*

In the 1860s, Bodie became synonymous with folly and broken dreams. Ten or more claims sprang up in the hills, but none were great producers. They were far overshadowed by the monumental strikes in places like Virginia City in 1859, Aurora in 1860, and others such as Benton and Cerro Gordo, to the south of Bodie, also in the 1860s. Bodie was considered a dud by the mining world. Actually, little gold was found even on W.S. Bodey's original claim, although gold was being extracted from sites in the broader region around Bodie.

Then, in 1875, a claim known as the Bunker Hill Mine suffered an accidental cave-in that revealed a rich vein of gold ore. The property changed hands several times, finally emerging as the Standard Mining and Milling Company. It was to be the longest-operating enterprise in the Bodie Mining District. Early gold processing was done with the aid of *arrastras,* simple animal-powered mills that slowly crushed the ore. The phenomenal success of the Standard's first year of production led the company to build its own gold stamp mill in 1876, and word spread like wildfire through the mining world. The Standard's good fortune, coupled with the decline of many Nevada mining camps, brought about the Bodie gold rush. Numerous companies were formed, and many threw caution to the wind, disregarding the primary rule of mining: "exploration should always precede extraction." The increased need for greater ore-processing capacity brought additional stamp mills to Bodie. The Standard Mill still stands today despite a disastrous fire that burned the original wooden structure to the ground in 1898; it was rebuilt utilizing corrugated iron and resumed production before the close of 1899. By 1877 a Bodie miners labor union was formed, one of the early labor unions in California.

The town sprang up in the 1870s with the sounds of the saw and hammer heard day and night. Stagecoaches arrived filled with passengers and left loaded with gold bullion. The massive machinery of mining was hauled in, mostly from San Francisco, at great expense. It did not matter to most, as "gold fever" attacked with a vengeance. Along with the miners and millers came assayers, storekeepers, entrepreneurs, and a few families, in addition to the

usual assortment of camp followers, such as gamblers, faro dealers, and prostitutes. With largely a single-male population, Bodie quickly gained a reputation as a "den of iniquity," even more famous for its violence than for its gold. Any desire could be fulfilled in Bodie, for a price. Civic pride is responsible for the change in the spelling of the town's name. Residents wanted to ensure no mispronunciation of their fair "City of the Sky," as they called it.

Bodie's population included a multitude of nationalities, though minorities remain largely obscured in its literature, as was true throughout most of the old West. Most of the miners were of Cornish descent, although living in Bodie were also Chinese, and a large portion of the town's shopkeepers, craftsmen, and laborers were Italians, Jews, Irish, Germans, and Mexicans. African Americans were few in number, though one of the original backers of the Bunker Hill Mine was an African American who worked as a boarding house manager. Also, still living in the area were remnants of the native tribes, the Paiute and Shoshone. To work in the mines or the mills you had to be a member of the union, however, and to be a member of the union the requirements were that you be a minimum of sixteen years of age, male, and white.

Census figures for 1880 counted Bodie's inhabitants at six to seven thousand, although some historians claimed it reached as high as 10,000. During the peak of occupancy, the school census reached 600, though not every child attended daily, since many were required to assist in the duties of running the household. It was not until the first population decline in 1882, due to the shrinking profitability of numerous companies, that the two churches were finally built.

By 1879, the existing water wells had proved to be inadequate for such a large town. Coupled with the increasing contamination of ground water from mining, the shortage prompted a search for a new water supply. Ultimately, year-round springs were located at Rough Creek, the Bodie Water Company formed and stock sold, and a wooden pipeline was laid from the springs to reservoirs built on the hillside above the town, from which gravity moved the water to the town. In 1881, the town put in the first fire hydrants on Main Street and completed the Bodie & Benton Railway, which ran from Mono Mills on the other side of Mono Lake to the top of the ridge in Bodie, solely to satisfy the town's enormous demand for wood. Since the town sat in a high desert area that is almost devoid of trees except for a few stands of aspens in the surrounding hills, in winter wood became even more valuable than gold.

With approximately two thousand buildings constructed principally of wood, fire was inevitable, and in 1892 Bodie suffered the first of its two great conflagrations. Despite the fire hydrants, the system was not well maintained, and the delay in getting water resulted in the destruction of sixty structures on Main Street, all due to a grease fire that started in a kitchen.

But every cloud has a silver lining, and in 1892 the Standard Company's superintendent, Thomas H. Leggett, convinced management that the long-distance transmission of electricity was possible. The town's local water supply was insufficient to support a hydro-electric plant, so one was built thirteen miles southwest of town, outside Bridgeport at Green Creek. The wires were brought into Bodie on a straight line because the thinking of the day was that if the wires were bent around corners there was a chance the electricity would jump off into space and be lost. Electrical power was a much-needed shot in the arm for the economy of the town, since many companies were already bankrupt.

The boost was not enough to stem the depopulation of Bodie, however. The exodus resumed later in the 1890s, when news of gold strikes in Arizona, Idaho, and Colorado reached the large number of the town's miners and mill workers who were already out of work. This began a movement back toward the east, but some people held on, determined that the town would someday recover its former glory. In 1895 the Standard was again in the forefront of the news when it started using the newly developed cyanide process to re-work tailing dumps and low-grade ore. Although the new technology revived activity for a while, even this was not enough to restore the town fully.

[text continues on page 318]

[text continued from page 311]

World War I, indeed all the years from 1910 to 1920, were not the kindest to Bodie. The population dropped from 500 to below 100. In 1917, the four locomotives departed for other work, and the railroad tracks were torn up and sold for scrap. In 1915, the Standard Mining and Milling Company also closed down, although the mining properties held by the Standard, including the mill itself, were leased on and off by various concerns until approximately 1938. The 1920s brought about the construction of an improved, but unpaved, highway, making Bodie more accessible to motorists, and it began to be known as a ghost town/tourist attraction. Some of Bodie's remaining residents took to running tours through the abandoned north end of town or operating cafes for visitors. In 1929, the Homestake Mining Company and Treadwell-Yukon merged in an effort to process discarded ore and mine low-grade quartz in Bodie. The onset of the Great Depression, however, had put an end to the enterprise by 1932.

Unfortunately, Bodie, by now reduced to a tiny hamlet with numerous abandoned buildings, suffered an even greater fire. On June 23, 1932, a blaze was started behind the Sawdust Corners Saloon by a small boy who was upset over not being served cake and ice cream at a birthday party. Again, fire-fighting equipment had not been maintained, and instead of water, rocks and dirt came through the lines. Even the hoses had not been preserved, and many fell to pieces as they were unfurled. This fire devastated the town. Between it and the 1892 fire, roughly ninety-five percent of the town's structures were lost.

No rebuilding took place after the 1932 fire. Landmarks such as the Occidental Hotel, the Bodie Bank, and the U.S. Hotel, were lost. Jim Cain, one of the most influential figures in Bodie since the late 1870s, lost almost everything except his home (he owned the Bodie Bank and other ventures). By 1935, even Cain had lost faith that Bodie would regain its status as "queen" of the mining camps, and he leased his mining property to the Roseklip Mines Company and moved to the area south of San Francisco. Roseklip's operation tried to take over where Treadwell-Yukon had left off, but in 1942 the Non-Essential Minerals Act closed down the business. That year also saw the closing of the post office and the school, which had only nine students by that time. In 1946, the Roseklip went back into operation but could not sustain enough success to stay in business, and when the plant burned down in 1946, the whole project was abandoned.

By the late 1940s, Bodie had gained a widespread reputation as a ghost town. When its residents had moved away, numerous artifacts had been left behind because the high cost of shipping had prohibited taking anything but the most precious, sentimental, or essential items. The town became more important for its lively past than for its potential as a mining property. The few remaining residents eked out their living working small claims, or catering to curious tourists. Although most of the townsite was eventually bought up by the Cain family, who installed a caretaker on the property, Bodie became the object of treasure-seekers and antique dealers. It is said that the scavengers used to watch the town from the surrounding hills, and when the caretaker went for supplies, they would swoop down like a flock of vultures, stealing whatever they could get their hands on. This practice is evidenced today by the large number of Bodie artifacts not only in private hands, but also on the marketplace.

In the late 1950s, the Cain family approached the state of California to negotiate the sale of Bodie. Its historical and cultural significance realized, Bodie became a state park in 1962, with the aim of preserving what was left there in a state of "arrested decay," thereby enabling visitors to get a feeling of what life was like in the town when it was a thriving community. Bodie has since become celebrated as one of the most authentic sites to experience the excitement of the Old West, and it is recognized by the Department of the Interior as a National Historic Landmark.

In recent years, with the rise of gold prices and improved recovery technology, there has been an attempt to re-open mining around Bodie. A Canadian firm, Galactic Resources, Ltd., operating in California through its subsidiary, the Bodie Consolidated Mining Company, leased and/or bought mineral rights from private owners and established additional claims on nearby public land with the United States Bureau of Land Management. Initial core drilling was done in late 1988 through 1990, and the new company believed that stores of gold found were rich enough to warrant production. Galactic

Bodie's U.S. Hotel, ca. 1931, just before the disastrous fire of June 23, 1932, which along with the fire of 1892 destroyed this building and overall about ninety-five percent of the town's buildings. *Courtesy Mr. and Mrs. James C. Doherty, Bishop, California, and Jill A. Lachman.*

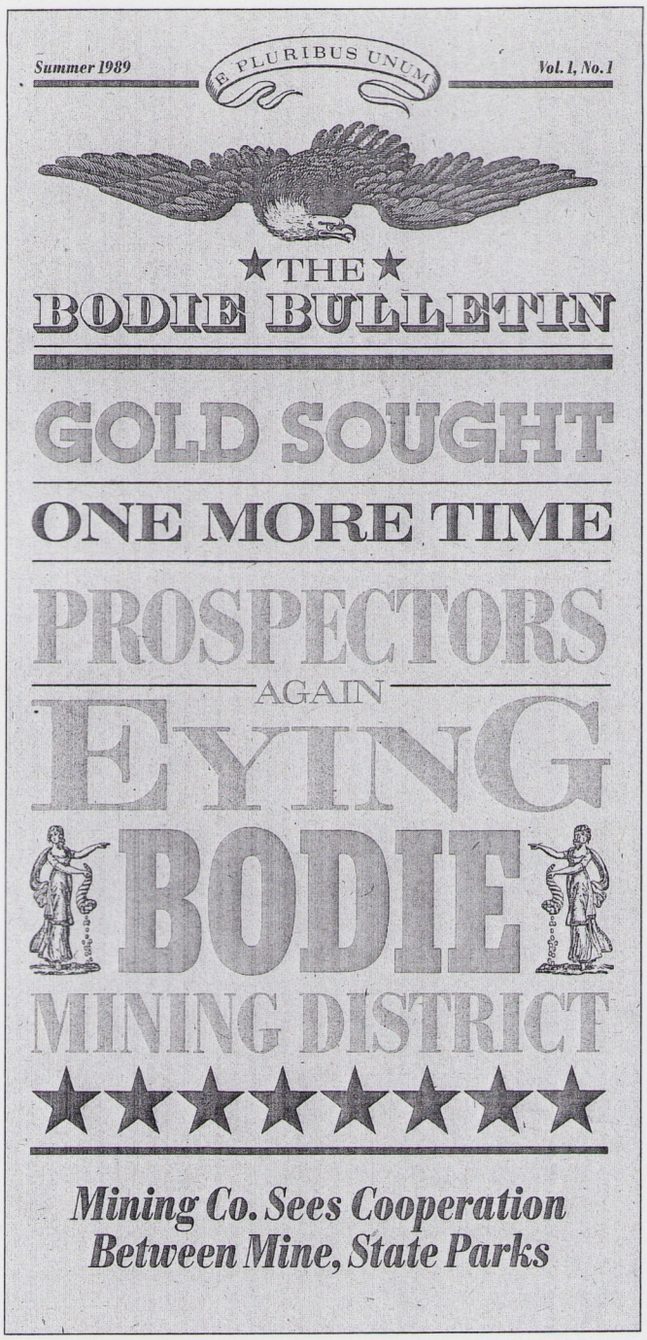
Resources blanketed the area with literature expounding on the virtues of renewed mining, new jobs, increased tourism, business growth, booming real estate, enrichment of the area, and predictions of a rise in Bodie's popularity. They particularly targeted Bodie's closest neighbor, Bridgeport, California. Galactic predicted that Bodie would once more become a center of economic activity.

On the other hand, citizens concerned about Bodie's historic preservation charged that even though the town exists in a state of "arrested decay," renewed mining would be devastating to the structures, the ambience of the town, and wildlife that either passes through the area or now makes its home in the remaining tailing dumps. In 1988, the California State Park Rangers Association formed the Save Bodie! Committee. Along with Eastern Sierra Citizens for the Protection of Bodie, it opposed the reestablishment of mining in Bodie and its vicinity and works in other ways to protect Bodie's historical integrity.

As of 1993, Galactic entered bankruptcy, due to an expensive cyanide clean-up that it had to undertake at its mine in Summitville, Colorado. Nevertheless, the fight to "Save Bodie!" is not yet won. Galactic still retains its Bodie holdings, and the bankruptcy trustee is currently trying to liquidate the property. The possibility exists, of course, that the company could sell the property to another mining company that would take over where Galactic left off. Galactic paid for preparation of a draft environmental impact report required by the Mono County Board of Supervisors and requested a permit for additional drilling and exploration. The decision of the supervisors had not been rendered at the time that Galactic filed for bankruptcy, and the county still considers the proposal to be pending.

In late 1994, however, the prospects for Bodie's preservation improved greatly. In the closing days of the congressional session, an act supported by the Save Bodie! Committee to shield Bodie from adverse effects of mining was amended into the California Desert Protection Act, which narrowly passed and was signed into law by President Clinton. The new law prohibits new mineral claims on 6,000 acres of federally owned land around Bodie, which is important particularly because Galactic's claims are expiring under bankruptcy proceedings. In the future, mining even on valid claims will be subject to regulations aimed at preventing injury to Bodie's natural and historical resources.

For now, Bodie stands with its weathered buildings and artifacts passively resisting time and the harsh elements, tenaciously clinging to its existence. Once it held the golden promise of a new tomorrow; now it symbolizes only abandoned dreams and memorials to another era. The wind whistles through the tin, recalling the melodies of hurdy-gurdies, the rustle of cards being shuffled by the faro dealers, the smell of chop stands, the din of gold stamp mills operating twenty-four hours a day six days a week, protracted gun fights, the laughter from the sixty-five saloons, the tinkling of piano keys, the bawdy calls of the prostitutes with color-


Summer 1989

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Vol. 1, No. 1

★THE★
BODIE BULLETIN

GOLD SOUGHT
ONE MORE TIME

PROSPECTORS
AGAIN
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BODIE
MINING DISTRICT

★★★★★★★★

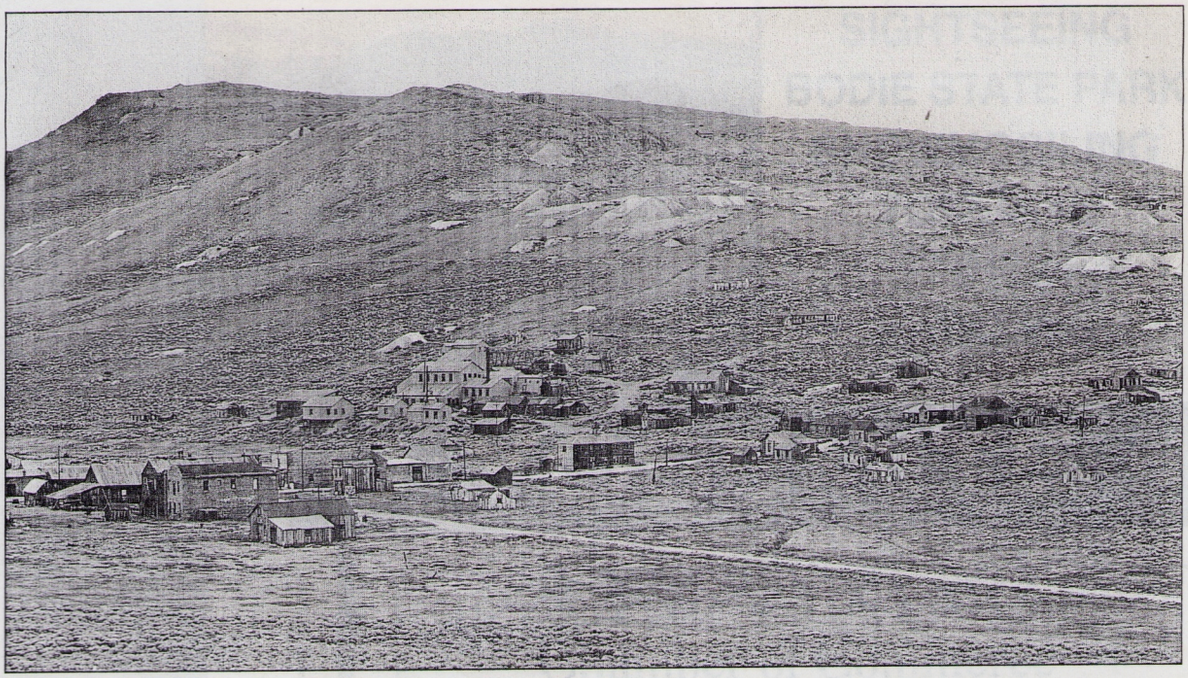
Mining Co. Sees Cooperation
Between Mine, State Parks

Cover of a 1989 brochure distributed by the Bodie Consolidated Mining Company as part of its campaign to convince the local population to support the reopening of mining in the Bodie district. *Courtesy Jill A. Lachman.*

ful names like Madame Moustache, French Joe, and Beautiful Doll, and the crackle of winters when epidemics of pneumonia and influenza swept through the town, taking an enormous toll.

Bodie now has a staff of three full-time park rangers and a maintenance worker who live there year-round in existing residences, moderately renovated. In the summer, the park takes on additional staff to assist with the influx of visitors who come from around the world for a glimpse of the remnants of people's lives left behind, through the locked doors and windows. They visit the park's museum, which contains artifacts of daily life, and purchase books about Bodie's colorful history. Visitors wander through the cemetery, which contains a memorial to President Garfield, though he is not buried in Bodie, and hear a history talk or take a tour of the Standard Mill. Bodie is an exceptional place. Called by many the best-preserved ghost town in the West, its popularity is on the rise. In 1993, almost 230,000 people visited Bodie. It is unique; its allure is captivating and its magic still survives. CHS

Photographer Jill Lachman's interest in Bodie began with her first visit there in 1984 during a photographic workshop. She has studied photography at Chabot College in Hayward, California, in addition to attending numerous workshops such as the Ansel Adams Workshop, lectures and field studies with photographic luminaries such as Brett Weston, Ruth Bernhard, Geir Jordahl, Clinton Smith, and Kate Jordahl. Her interest in Bodie has led her to become a seasonal staff member at Bodie State Historic Park for the past three years. Ms. Lachman's works have appeared in group exhibitions both regionally and nationally. Since 1993 she has exhibited as a solo artist. Images from her Bodie portfolio have appeared in the Washington Post, Travel 50 and Beyond *magazine, and in several other books and publications. Lachman's upcoming exhibitions include the Olive Hyde Gallery, Fremont, California, January 11-February 12, 1995; and Charleston Heights Art Center, Las Vegas, Nevada, September-October, 1995.*



Modern-day Bodie, ca. 1993, by Jill A. Lachman. The large light-colored structure to the left of center is all that remains of the extensive industrial mining buildings that once dominated the Bodie landscape. The ridge above Bodie, lying outside the borders of the state park, has been the site where various mining interests have proposed to reopen mining. It was these federally controlled lands that were at least in part protected by Congress's passage of the California Desert Protection Act in the fall of 1994. *Courtesy Jill A. Lachman.*

For More Information

Bodie State Historic Park is best visited during the summer. At other times the weather is unpredictable. Off-season visitors are cautioned to check at the Mono County sheriff's office in Bridgeport or to call Bodie State Historic Park for road and weather conditions before making the trip. Roads are often difficult; trailers are not advised. Over-snow equipment such as snowmobiles, skis, and snowshoes may be required to reach the park during winter months. (Snowmobiles are not allowed in the townsite.) An entrance fee is charged year-round. Interpretive programs generally run from Memorial Day to Labor Day, and it is advised that visitors contact the park regarding that schedule. Those interested in more information about Bodie State Historic Park may write or call the park at: Bodie State Historic Park, P.O. Box 515, Bridgeport, California 93517, (619) 647–6445. Questions may also be directed to Save Bodie!, California State Park Rangers Association, P.O. Box 292010, Sacramento, California 95829–2010, (916) 558–3734.

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Suggested Viewing

Bodie: Ghost Town Frozen in Time. (video available for sale at Bodie State Historic Park)

McCabe and Mrs. Miller. (movie)

The Untold West, Parts I, II, III. (TV documentary special)

The Treasure of the Sierra Madre (movie)

FAMOUS BODIE

SEE AN OLD WEST GOLD-MINING GHOST TOWN

Founded by a soon-to-be dead man, burned down by a toddler, roamed by outlaws: the wild history of Bodie and the fine state of its buildings make this one of the most famous Old West ghost towns in the country.

This Scenic 395 landmark is a state historic park, with the stories and atmosphere to make for a memorable trip. Thousands of visitors each year can't be wrong. About a hundred buildings remain in arrested decay — frozen in time. That means golden hues of wood weathered by more than a century of wind, rain and sun, tin roofs running red with rust, and leaning walls propped up by old beams.

Visitors can walk down the deserted streets of a real life Western ghost town and get the feel of what he must have been like 150 years ago.

Two miners found the first gold here back in 1859; one of them was named William Body. Though thousands would later profit from his findings, Body froze to death on a supply run that first winter. The extravagant town named after him eventually housed up to 10,000 people in the roaring 1870s and 1880s. Several hundred buildings housed gold miners looking to cash in on the great Standard Mining Company strike of 1877, plus the sixty-odd gambling, drinking and dance houses that sought to separate those same men from their hard-earned money. People flocked to Bodie, transforming it from a town of a few dozen into a boomtown.

Despite the high desert hardships, many stayed on, pulling in an estimated $32 million in gold and another $6 million in silver from the hills during Bodie's heyday. However, first a stock market crash and then a major fire destroyed Bodie.

Today, interiors remain as they were left and stocked with goods. Designated as a National Historic Site and a State Historic Park in 1962, the remains of Bodie are being preserved in a state of "arrested decay." This once-thriving mining town is now visited by tourists, howling winds and an occasional ghost.

To preserve the ghost town atmosphere, there are no commercial facilities at Bodie, such as food or gasoline. There is a bookstore inside the museum, where you may also inquire about daily tours.
Bridgeport is just a short distance north and has all the amenities you could ever need including lodging, dining, camping, groceries, gasoline, fishing supplies and lots of shops.

Everything in Bodie is a part of the historic scene and is fully protected. Nothing may be collected or removed from the park and metal detectors are not allowed. But feel free to photograph all you want.

For public protection, certain unstable sections of the park are posted as prohibited areas and are closed to entry by park visitors. Bodie is open all year. However, because of the high elevation, 8376', it is accessible only by skis, snowshoes or snowmobiles during winter months. Snowmobiles must stay on designated roads in the Bodie Hills.

Remember that winter weather is often unpredictable. Sub-zero temperatures, strong winds and white-out conditions are common. Many four-wheel drive vehicles with chains get stuck each year in powdery snow. In spring, mud can be a problem. Local towing services, when available, can be costly.

To get to Bodie, take State Highway 270 from a point on Hwy 395 about seven miles south of Bridgeport. Drive about 13 miles east to Bodie. The last three miles are on a graded dirt road suitable for most passenger vehicles.

For more info call 760-647-6445 or visit **www.parks.ca.gov** and search for the Bodie links.

Whispers of the Past

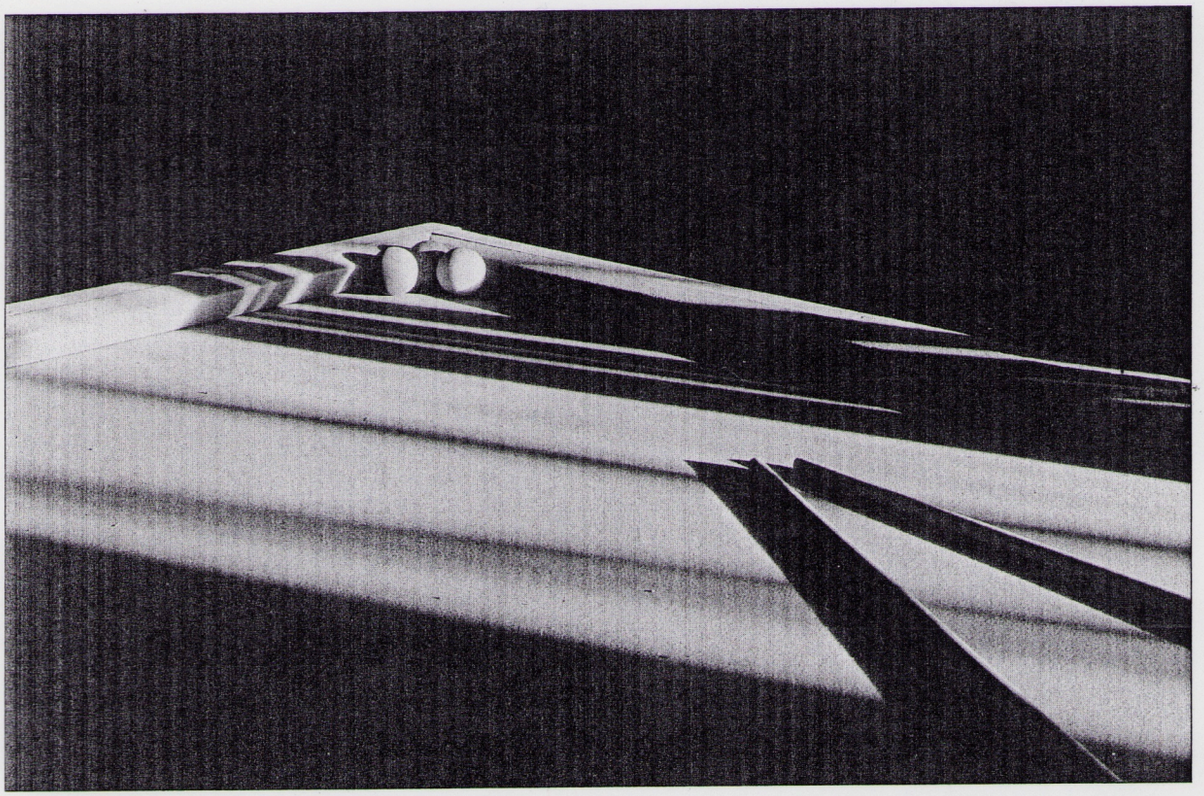
GHOST TOWN OF BODIE

Visit the wildest, toughest, gold camp of the early West —Bodie. Bodie is a State Historic Park, a National Historic Site and a State Historical Landmark. The ghost towns of Mono were prominent in the history of the early West and number such names as Masonic, Lundy, Old Mammoth, Boulder Flats, the site of Jordan, Dog Town, Old Benton, Bennettville and Belfort.

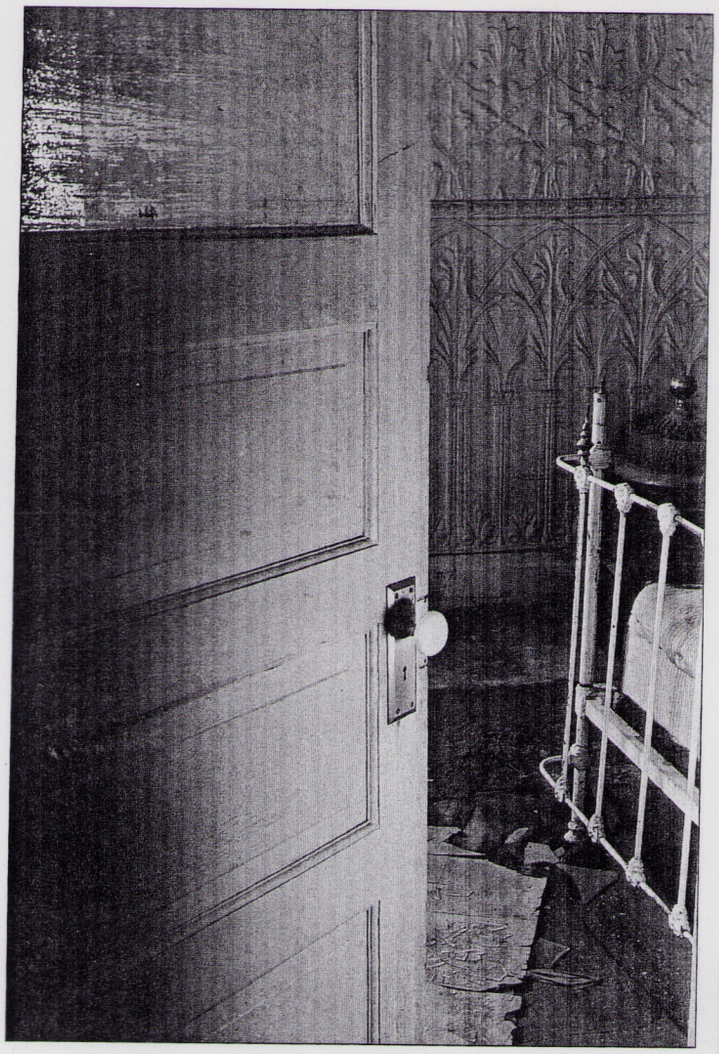
Bodie is an original mining town from the late 1800's. What's left today stands in a state of "arrested decay" and is maintained by the CA State Parks System, who took over the town in 1962 to make it a State Historic Park.

Bodie, California
A Portfolio of Photographs

by Jill A. Lachman



"The Billiard Table," photograph by Jill A. Lachman, original in color. The building housing this abandoned billiard table served first as the Bodie Land Office, next as the power company headquarters, and finally as the Wheaton & Hollis Hotel. *Courtesy Jill A. Lachman.*

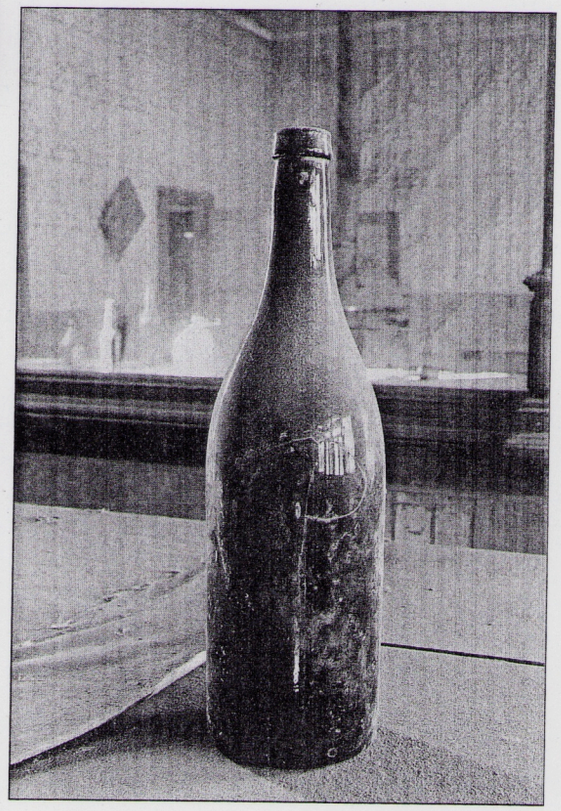


"Open Doorway," by Jill A. Lachman, original in color. The Wheaton & Hollis Hotel, one of the better inns of Bodie, boasted wrought-iron bed frames and pressed tin walls, even in the rooms, and some rooms even had their own stoves for combatting the frigid Bodie winter. *Courtesy Jill A. Lachman.*

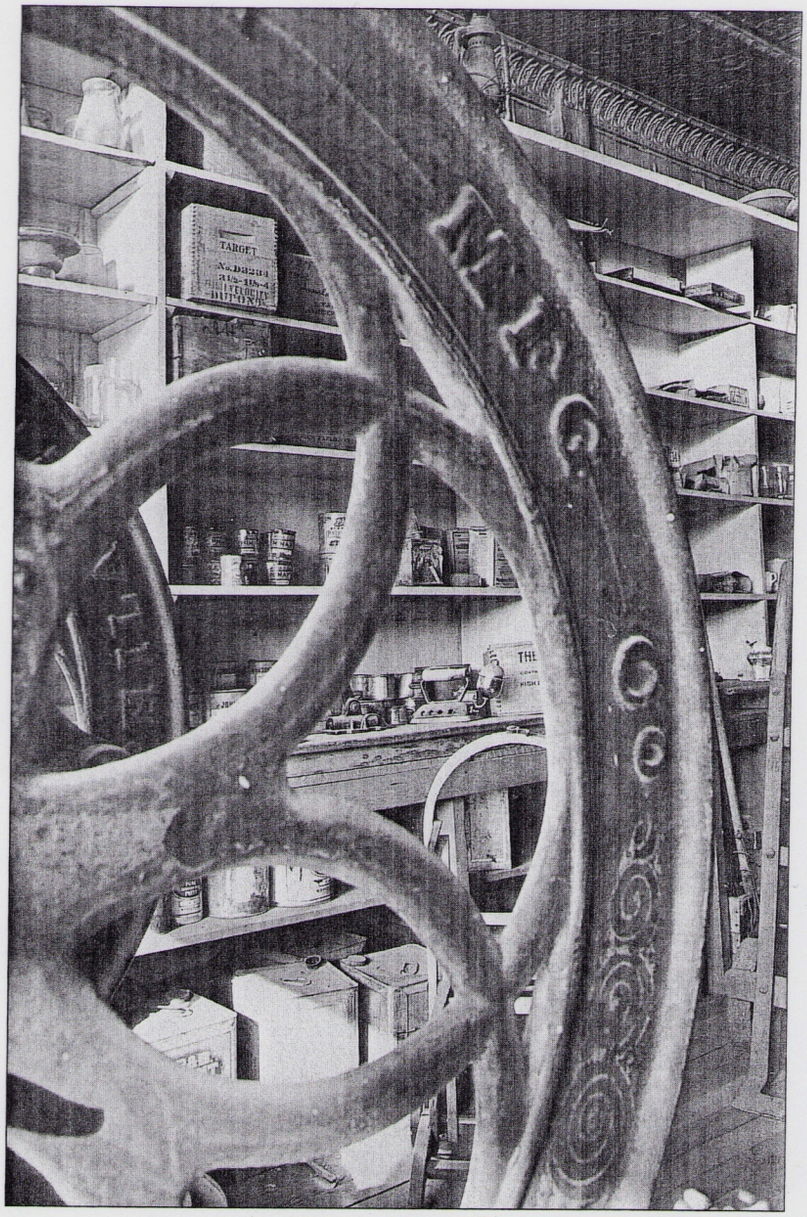
California's official gold mining ghost town, Bodie was once notorious as the wildest town in the West. From 1877 to 1888, the community swelled to more than 10,000 residents and produced over $35 million in gold and silver.

Now a State Historic Park, Bodie is the largest unrestored ghost town in the West – a pleasing alternative to today's theme parks. Visitors can explore the museum, follow a self guided tour, or wander the dirt streets peaking in the windows of the homes, stores, saloons, barbershops, and the church for a glimpse into life of a bygone era.

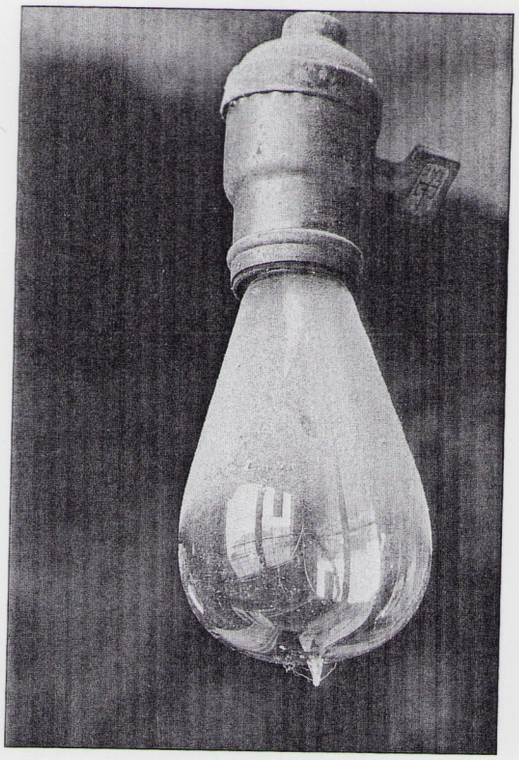
Restrooms and water are the only available services so be sure to pack a lunch, bring sunscreen, your camera, and a jacket for your Bodie outing. A nominal fee is charged to enter the park, open at 8am daily.



"Bar, Wheaton-Hollis Hotel," by Jill A. Lachman, original in color. The remnant of the Wheaton & Hollis Hotel's bar, complete with large mirror and pressed tin walls, still speaks of Bodie's lost opulence. *Courtesy Jill A. Lachman.*

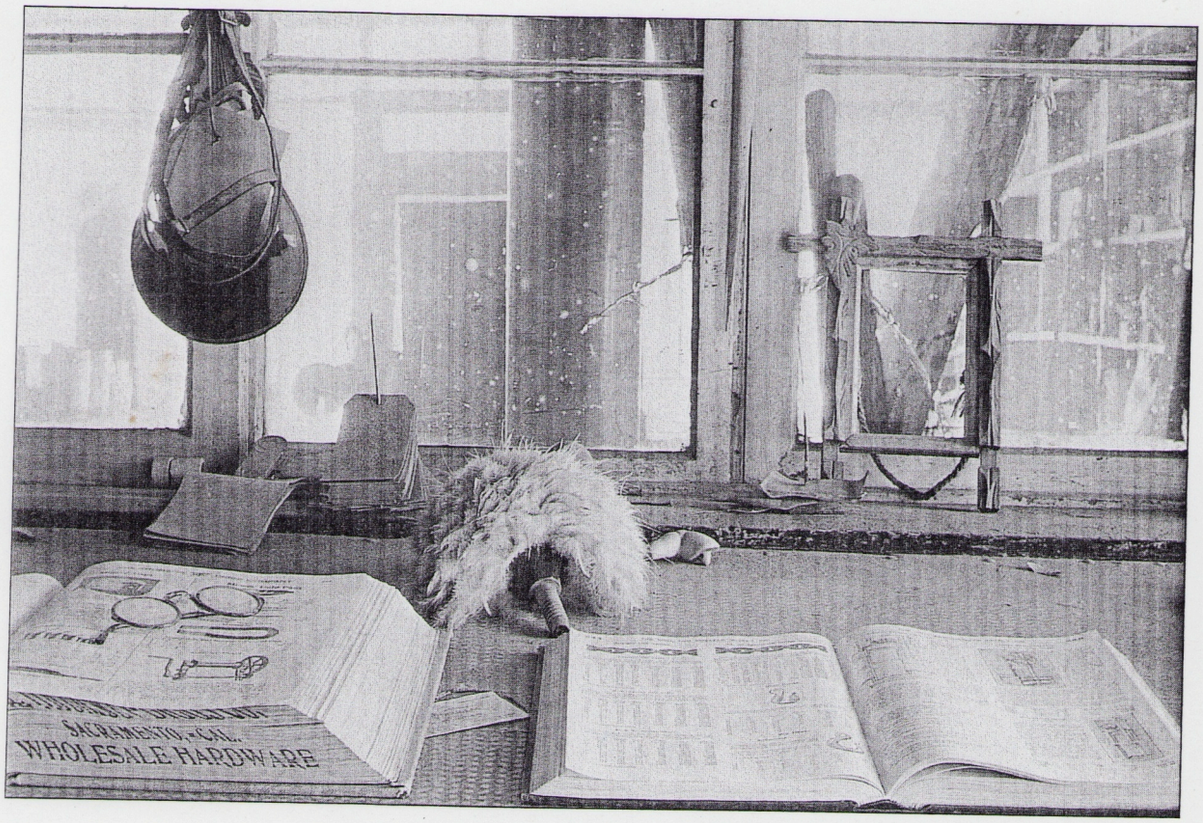


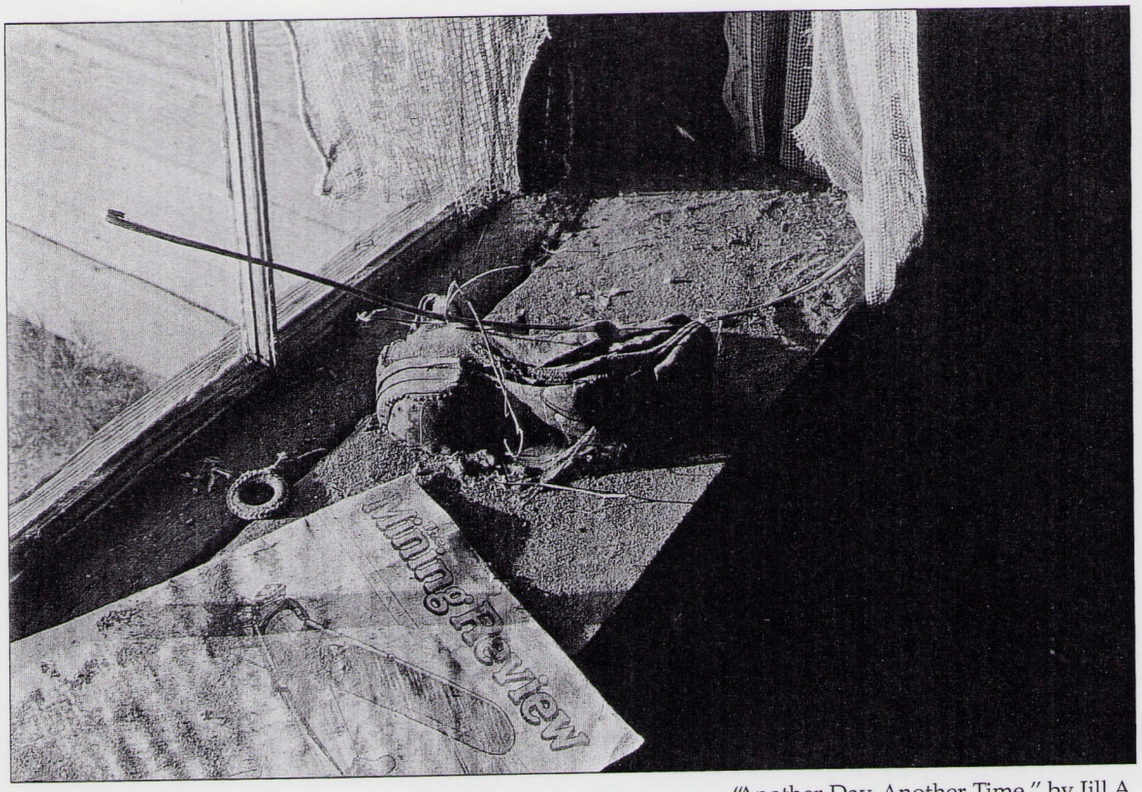
"Detail, Boone Store," by Jill A. Lachman, original in color. Viewed through a coffee mill, the merchandise of the Boone Store still sits on the shelves as if awaiting purchase. *Courtesy Jill A. Lachman.*



Left" "A Lightbulb's View," by Jill A. Lachman, original in color. In the park's state of "arrested decay," even the lightbulbs are not allowed to be dusted. Nevertheless, this one reveals what lies outside the building. *Courtesy Jill A. Lachman.*

Below: "Interior, Boone Store," by Jill A. Lachman, original in color. Erected in 1879 and once owned by a descendent of Daniel Boone, this building served as a general store. *Courtesy Jill A. Lachman.*

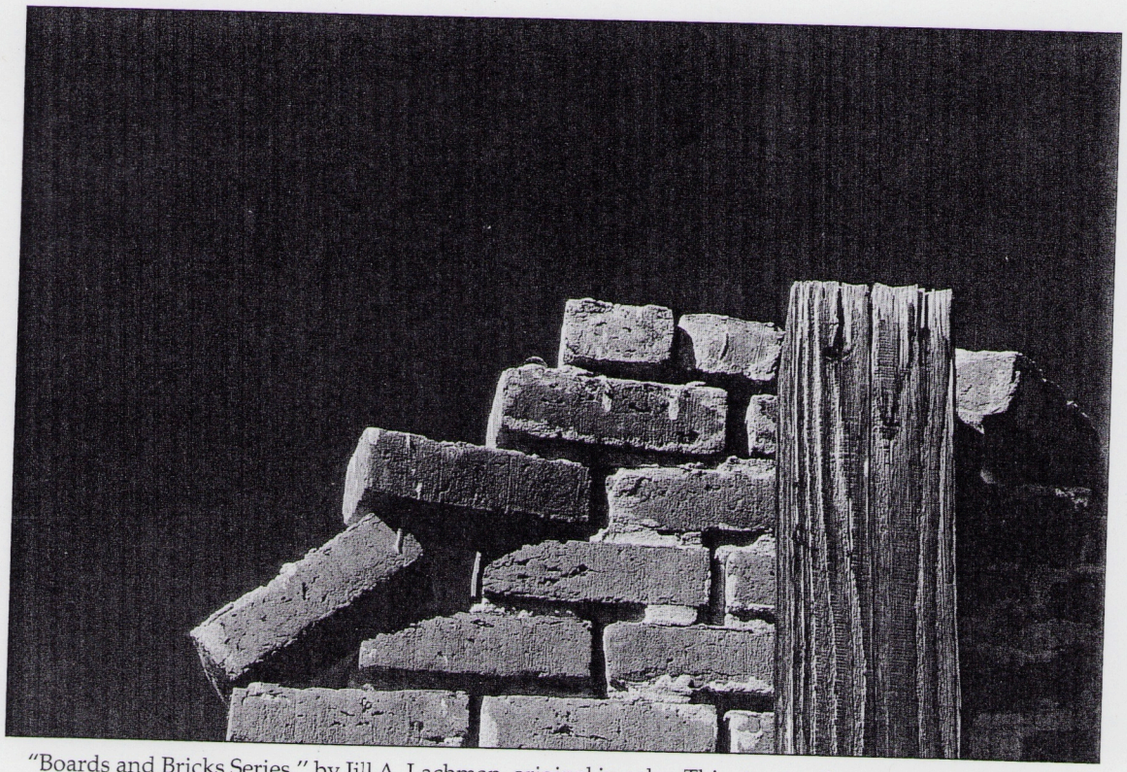




"Another Day, Another Time," by Jill A. Lachman, original in color. Artifacts of life in Bodie, still located in the one-time residence of the town's infamous one-armed lawyer, Patrick Reddy. *Courtesy Jill A. Lachman.*

"Assayer's Office," by Jill A. Lachman, original in color. Assayer A. Soderling was in business in Bodie for more than twenty-five years. After the 1932 fire, he moved his office, complete with bottles of chemicals, into the Wheaton & Hollis Hotel. *Courtesy Jill A. Lachman.*

"Interior, Miller House," by Jill A. Lachman, original in color. Tom Miller worked for the Mono Lake Railway & Lumber Company at Mono Mills. This state-park building is open to the public as an example of Bodie's housing. *Courtesy Jill A. Lachman.*



"Boards and Bricks Series," by Jill A. Lachman, original in color. This structural remnant was part of the crumbling Mastretti Liquor Warehouse in the north end of town, located conveniently to serve the neighborhood holding the bulk of Bodie's sixty-five saloons. *Courtesy Jill A. Lachman.*

A BRIEF HISTORY OF BODIE

In 1857 gold was being produced in placer mines at Dog Town, near the present town of Bridgeport. In July 1859, a drunken miner discovered the far more valuable placer deposit later to become Monoville. From the area around Monoville in the summer of 1859 four men, W. S. Bodey, Black Taylor, Garraty, and Doyle, prospected to the north and east. They discovered a placer deposit of gold in the vicinity of the present town of Bodie. Bodey perished in the winter of 1859-60. Winter temperatures in the Bodie area plunge to minus forty degrees Fahrenheit, and snowfall ranges to twenty feet deep.

In the summer of 1860 the first lode claim was made. In 1861 the oldest building in Bodie was built, known today as the Hydro Building. In 1863 the first mining corporation was formed.

In 1878 a comprehensive report on the mines was published by Joseph Wasson, who estimated the population of Bodie at 2000. But currently we estimate the population during the peak years of 1879 through 1881 at between 10,000 and 13,000. It was during this period that, for several months, the town averaged six murders per week and gained national recognition as the "Wildest Town in the West".

During the late 1880's Bodie experienced its first decline. In 1895 the newly discovered cyanide process was successfully used in Bodie to augment the less efficient amalgamation process. Bodie boomed again.

In 1892 Bodie experienced its first and most disastrous fire.

By 1915 the mines had declined, and many had closed. During the 1920's limited exploratory work was done; for example, the Standard was still searching for the fabulous, faulted Fortuna vein.

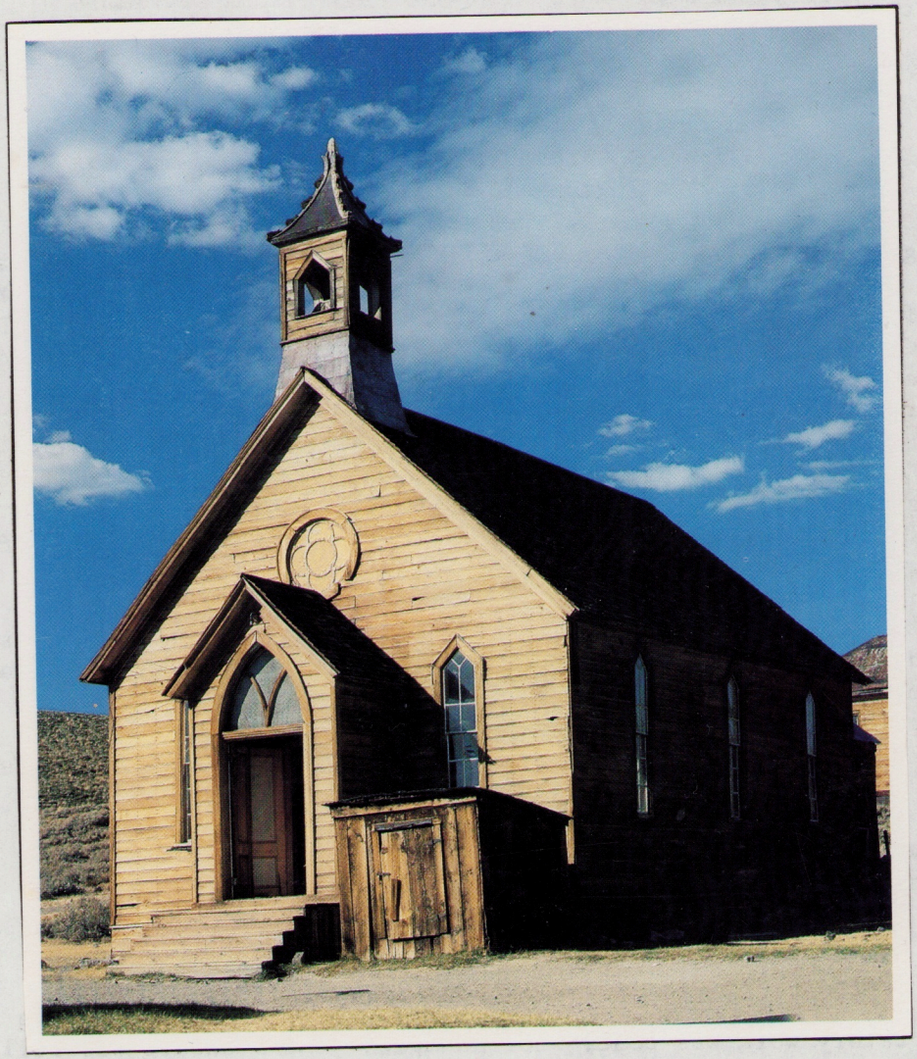
In 1932 the second disastrous fire occurred. What remains of Bodie today is about five percent of the town as it was at its peak.

The last gold recovery activity was that of the Roseklip Mines, 1938 through 1941. The Roseklip reworked the dumps and tailings.

Total production in the Bodie Mining District has been estimated at about 100 million dollars in gold, and between three and eight million dollars in silver.

Bodie became a State Historic Park in 1962.

P A R K S A R E F O R P E O P L E F O R E V E R



The town that lived, died by gold fever

The lure of gold brought all types of folks to the town of Bodie

By Reed Parsell
Sacramento Bee 6-14-2001

BODIE, Calif. – Its dilapidated buildings constructed mostly of wood, a place twice nearly destroyed by fire, Bodie nevertheless has no trees. Not along its unpaved streets, not beside its shabby creek, not on the surrounding hills, which are covered only by sagebrush.

Perhaps the absence of peaceful, calming trees is appropriate for a place that was built on greed, fueled by sin and destined to quickly become a ghost town. Bodie State Historic Park, 200 miles southeast of Sacramento near Mono Lake and the Nevada border, gives visitors a visual and sensory lesson on how an ailment known as gold fever could make people live in such a forbidding environment.

Temperatures can plummet in winter to minus 25 degrees, with a wind chill of 60 below. Snowdrifts can reach 20 feet. Even in its heyday, Bodie reportedly had just one green spot, a small garden in which only hops would grow.

Lawlessness, however, bloomed in full. Around 1880, Bodie had about 10,000 residents, at least 60 saloons and dance halls, three breweries and a proliferation of prostitutes. Killings were common, with each victim's age tolled by a fire bell during burials. Such justice as there was could be flimsy, one example being the fate of Joseph DeRoche, accused of murdering Thomas Treloar.

"Case dismissed," Bodie's justice of the peace wrote, "as the defendant was taken out and hanged by a mob."

A little girl, upon learning her family was moving to the remote mining town, made a significant contribution to Wild West lore by writing in her diary, "Goodbye God, I'm going to Bodie."

On a breezy, cloudy afternoon this spring, three dozen or so tourists were exploring what must be considered one of the country's most-distinctive ghost towns. About 60 large structures remain, representing 10 percent or less of what was in Bodie during the late 19th century. Many buildings have windows through which visitors can examine dust-covered remnants of a community crippled by a massive fire in 1932 and, for all intents and purposes, extinct by World War II.

Among the structures, and within their drafty walls, are:

The morgue, in which can be seen at least three child-size, wooden caskets.

The schoolhouse, by whose window ledges are cardboard jack-o'-lanterns presumably made by Bodie students. Then again, they might be stage props, as surely is writing on the blackboards such as "Eighth grade: Your projects are due on Friday." Scattered on student desks and tables are such books as "Primer of Physiology" and "Carpenter's New Geographical Reader."

The houses of Henry Metzger and Lester E. Bell, both of which have wicker-style baby carriages on their junky floors.

Sam Leon's bar, which contains two roulette wheels with stacked and scattered poker chips about them, and the Wheaton & Hollis Hotel and Bodie Store, housing a billiards table atop which are two cues and three balls.

The most elaborate displays can be seen inside the Boone Store and Warehouse, once owned by a direct descendant of frontiersman Daniel Boone. A poster shows a young wife using two sticks to lift a dripping piece of clothing from a bucket, with the caption, "It's easy to dye with Diamond Dyes." A tin container once held "15 Live Red Worms." Wooden boxes have labels such as Varsity Sweets, Petite Soda Wafers and Queen's Chop Extra Choicest English Breakfast Tea.

One of the tallest and largest buildings is the Methodist Church, which like the school still has a tower with bell inside. The Bodie Bank is gone except for a crumbling brick wall around its safe, from which $4,000 was stolen in 1916. Behind the jail is a road sign that marks Bonanza Street, a.k.a. "Virgin Alley" or "Maiden Lane," once a place where love came at a price.

Visitors also will be sure to see many precariously leaning outhouses, photographers scurrying about with tripods, people standing on tiptoe to gaze in windows at all manner of peeling wallpaper, rusty cars and mining equipment scattered about the site, a fire hydrant (ironically), rodents and, of all things, seagulls. Among the certain sounds are wind, birds, a comment such as "I'm going back to the car to get a second shirt" and someone speaking German. For whatever reason, Germans seem to have an inordinate appetite for all things Wild West.

Bodie's brief life began in 1859, when Waterman S. Bodey and his partner, Black Taylor, discovered gold there. Things developed slowly until the Standing Mining Co. made a rich strike in 1877, prompting a population explosion in the next few years. One of the state's first workers' unions was established on site in 1877, and the $4-a-day wages were magnificent, considering that 50 years later a Bodie miner was paid $1 per shift.

Bodey perished in a snowstorm a few months after his and Taylor's discovery. He is buried in the town's small cemetery, which is accessible by a short trail. "This small, sturdy, indomitable man

over

The town's long gone, but tourists still come to see the oddity that is Bodie State Historical Park. *Photo by Reed Parsell / The Sacramento Bee*

left Bodie to posterity, never knowing it's (sic) importance," reads a graveside marker installed in 1976.

Sturdy and indomitable as he may have been, Bodey lived to be just 45. The town for which he was named - its spelling was altered to promote the correct pronunciation, according to park brochures - lived about 85 years. Long may it rest, peacefully, as an offbeat tourist attraction.

Bodie State Historic Park is open from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. from Memorial Day weekend through Labor Day; it closes two or three hours earlier other times of year. For more information: (619) 647-6445; http://ceres.ca.gov/sierradsp/bodie.html; or write to Bodie State Historic Park, P.O. Box 515, Bridgeport, CA 93517.

A well-conceived pamphlet, available for $1 just off the parking lot, points the way for a self-guided tour. Bodie is being preserved in "arrested decay," meaning that while no construction or extensive renovation work is being done, what exists there now is being protected to whatever extent is feasible, given staff and monetary limitations. At least three of the structures are used as employee residences, and a small museum - open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily during the summer and for shorter periods other seasons - contains such curiosities as an opium lamp, a hand-warmer and two very odd pencil sharpeners.

BODIE, CALIF.

Bodie is a cursed ghost town. Pilfer anything from one of the old sun-bleached buildings north of Mono Lake — a nail, part of a clock or even an old bottle — and bad luck latches onto you forever. Don't believe it? Then tell it to the visitors of this ghost town who have been returning stolen stuff with tales of heartbreak, death and serious injury that beset them once they left this Eastern Sierra settlement. One fearful visitor even returned the nail that pierced her tire as she drove through town.

One of the most famous ghost towns in the entire west is Bodie, the historic mining town which is only a few miles east of U.S. Highway 395 between Lee Vining and Bridgeport.

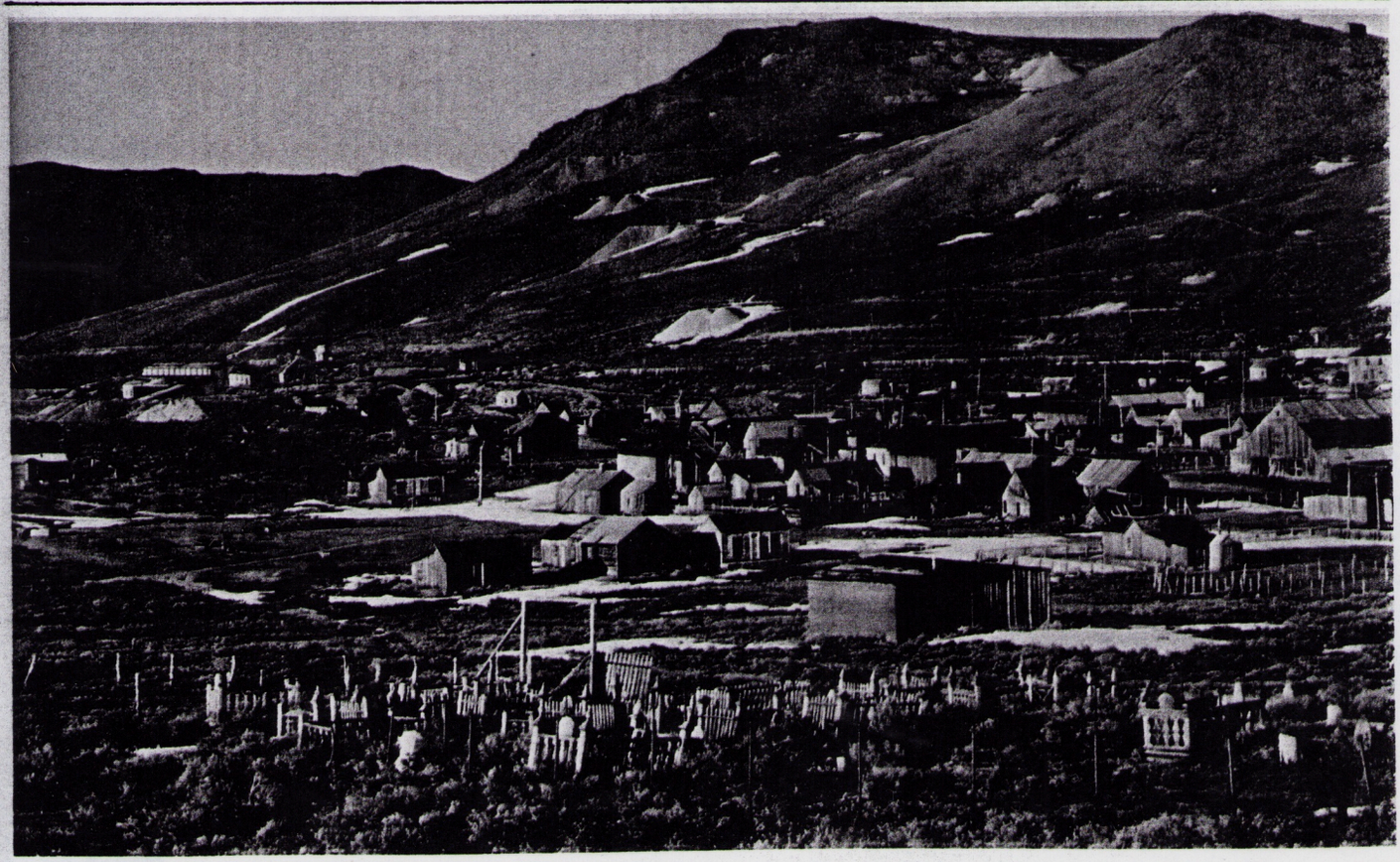
If you're traveling north from Lee Vining, turn right on the Pole Line Road *(the highway to Hawthorne)* just north of Mono Lake and follow the paved road for several miles until you see the plainly marked turnoff to Bodie. It is 18 miles from U. S. 395 to Bodie by this route. If you're traveling south from Bridgeport you may turn east on the Bodie road which meets the highway just south of Willow Springs. Distance from this junction to the colorful old ghost town is 13 miles. Both are good dirt roads.

According to Ella M. Cain in "The Story of Bodie" the wild and wooly mining boom town laid claim to four unique features: first, the wildest street of any mining camp; second, the wickedest men; third, the worst climate out of doors; and fourth, the best water on earth.

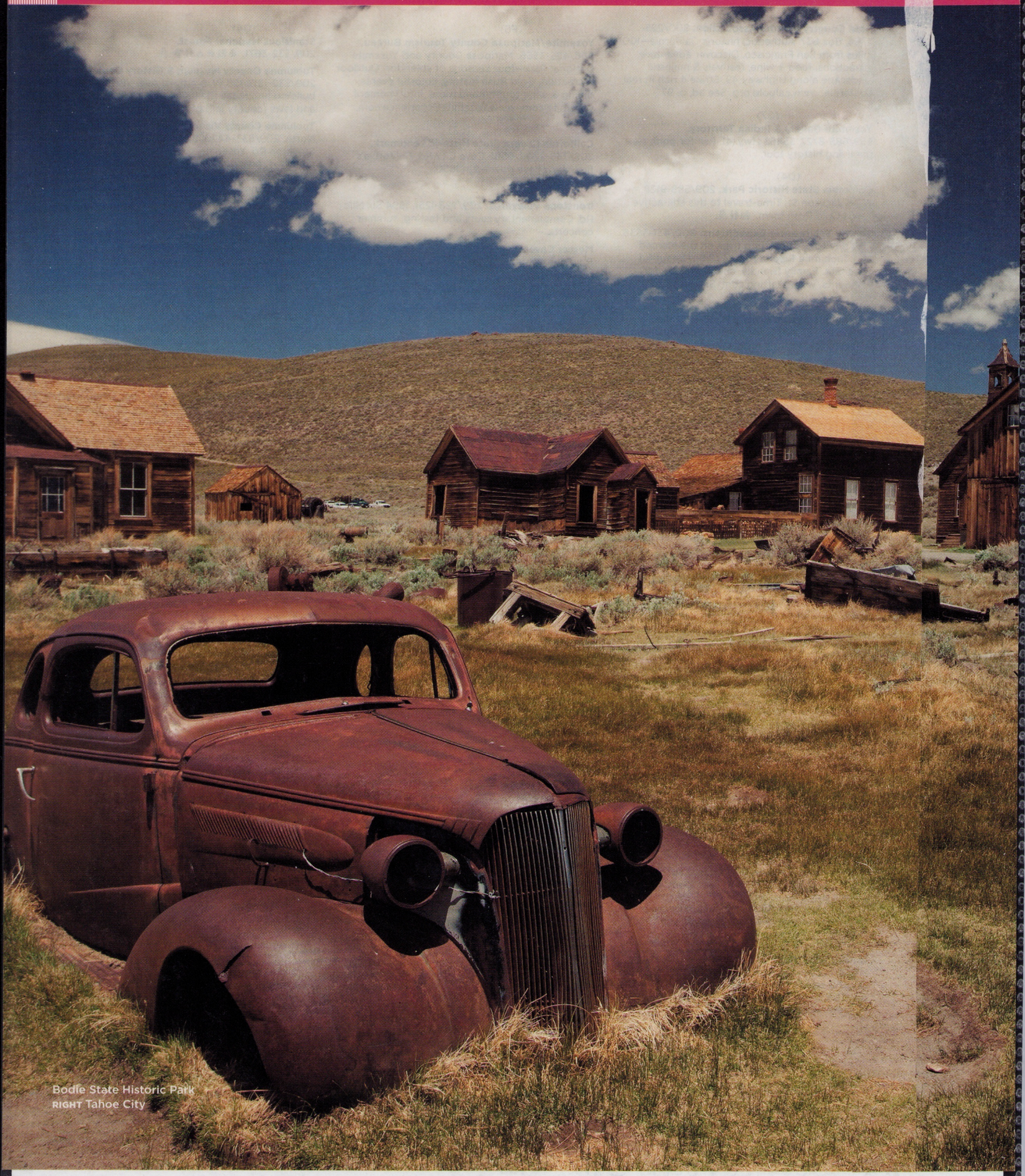
Actually "Bodie" should be called "Bodey" because the gold in the area was first discovered by William S. Bodey, a Dutchman from Poughkeepsie, New York. It is said that the man who painted the first sign on a livery stable in that community, misspelled the name and that spelling still stands to this day.

Twenty years after the first discovery of gold the town of Bodie gained the reputation of being the most lawless, the wildest, the toughest mining camp the far west has ever known. It produced more than 120 million dollars in gold and the slogan "The Bad Man from Bodie" was heard around the world.

The first real stampede to Bodie began in 1878 when very rich veins of gold were reported leading to a population of between 12,000 and 15,000 persons. By 1890, only 10 years later, the population was down to 2000 and by the turn of the century only 1500 remained.

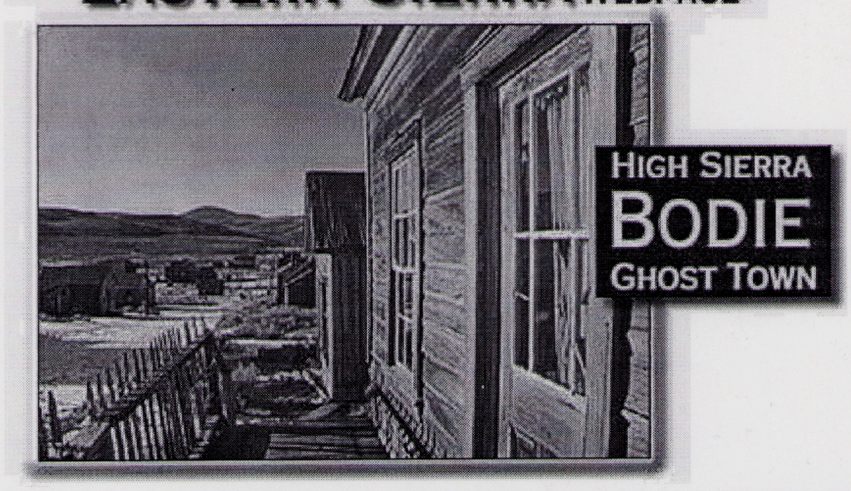


Here is an interesting view of Bodie taken from the old cemetery. The fabulous mining town once boasted a population of 10,000. (Frashers Photo).



Bodie State Historic Park
RIGHT Tahoe City

THE EASTERN SIERRA WEBPAGE



Lee Vining | The Bodie Railway | Mono Lake

Bodie, CA:
A real live Ghost Town. No MacDonalds, no tourist trinkets, no motels, one bathroom, and no paved road to get there on. This is the real thing. Bodie was a happening place around the 1870's through the early years of this century. As many as 12,000 people lived there during some of that time...successfully mining more gold than you or I could ever possibly wear. Mining actually continued till the 1930's. Bodie became a State Historic Park after that, protected as a historic monument. That kept the commercial tourist activity to a minium...and allowed for today what is truly a rewarding sight seeing tour. Much of the town was destroyed by fire (several times), but what remains today is a remarkable representation of what life would have been like "in the old days" in a difficult, sometimes desperate, environment like the Eastern Sierra. Many buildings remain, and in fact contain furnishings, clothing articles, kitchen supplies, and other household items left behind by their owners. The buildings and contents are real, this isn't Disneyland. The Park Service maintains a policy of 'arrested decay'. Things are allowed to remain as they were one hundred years ago...they only thing they do is try to preserve the buildings in their present state. The result is a remarkable display of history.

California's official gold mining ghost town, Bodie was once notorious as the wildest town in the West. From 1877 to 1888, the community swelled to more than 10,000 residents and produced over $35 million in gold and silver.

Now a State Historic Park, Bodie is the largest unrestored ghost town in the West – a pleasing alternative to today's theme parks. Visitors can explore the museum, follow a self guided tour, or wander the dirt streets peaking in the windows of the homes, stores, saloons, barbershops, and the church for a glimpse into life of a bygone era.

Restrooms and water are the only available services so be sure to pack a lunch, bring sunscreen, your camera, and a jacket for your Bodie outing. A nominal fee is charged to enter the park, open at 8am daily.

The first time I visited Bodie I was overcome by a sense of history, and very much aware of the feeling this was a place where ghosts COULD exist. Walk through the graveyard, through the streets, and through the open buildings. An almost overwhelming sense presence prevades. Not an evil presence. Just an incredible feeling and empathy for what it was like to live out there during the 1800's. There are several park employees who live year round doing maintenance and keeping things safe from vandals...it must be an amazing experience to be in Bodie midwinter during heavy weather...I'll bet that's when you have plenty of ghost company at the old saloon.

Bodie was a happening place around the 1870's and through the early years of the 20th century. As many as 12,000 people lived there during that time — successfully mining gold. Mining actually continued till the 1930's. Bodie became a State Historic Park after that, protected as a historic monument. That kept the commercial tourist activity to a minimum — and allowed, today, what is truly a rewarding sightseeing tour. Much of the town was destroyed by fire (several times), but what remains is a remarkable representation of what life was like "in the old days"; a difficult and sometimes desperate, environment in the Eastern Sierra.

Bodie is open whenever the road is open. It's about 10 miles off HWY 395 along a dirt semi-maintained road. Roughly an hour or so north of Mammoth Lakes, and about 20 minutes south of Bridgeport. During winter if there has been enough snow you would have to ski in (actually a lot of fun). There is an entrance fee of around $5 per carload. There are no services out there, so either bring lunch, or eat afterwards in Bridgeport. One bathroom, no motels, no nick nack shops (one museum is open during the summer where you can buy Bodie books and a few other things.) It's hot during the summer, and potentially very cold during the winter.

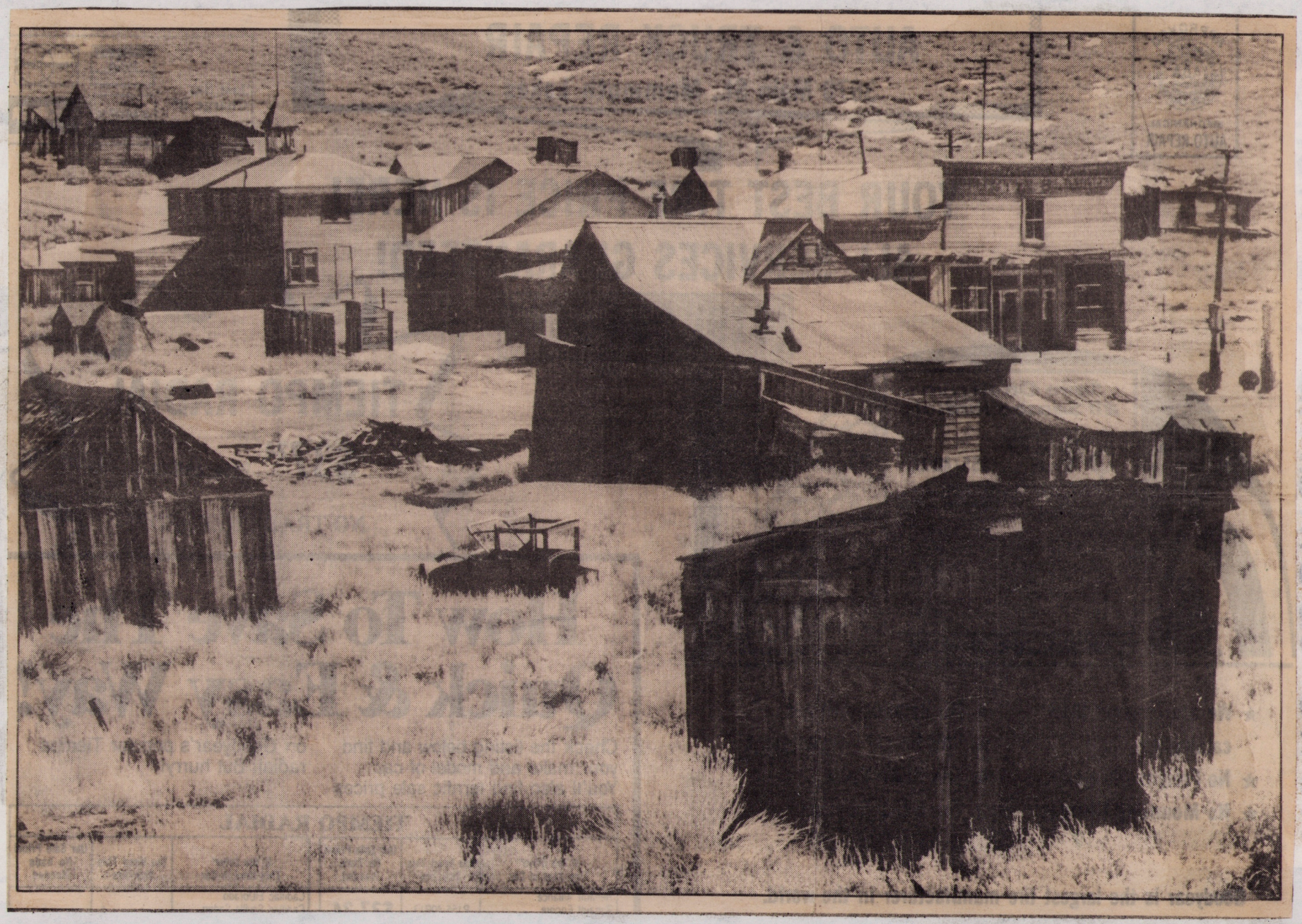
MURPHEY'S MOTEL

Murphey's Motel
Lee Vining, CA
760-647-6316
Reservations only: 800-334-6316

Only 15 minutes to June Mountain Ski Area, 30 minutes to Mammoth Mountain Ski Area and just one mile to Tioga Pass Road, the Eastern Gateway to Yosemite National Park... Murphey's puts you right where you want to be.

Lee Vining | The Bodie Railway | Mono Lake

SIERRA WEBPAGE



OVER

Bodie

Photo by Bill Husa

History: Indoor scenes which can be viewed at Bodie State Historic Park maintain an uncanny link to the old west.

Bodie is where the ghosts live!

One of the most famous ghost towns in the entire west is Bodie, the historic mining town which is only a few miles east of U.S. 395 between Lee Vining and Bridgeport.

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The first real stampede to Bodie began in 1878 when rich veins of gold were reported leading to a population of between 12,000 and 15,000 persons. By 1890, only 10 years later, the population was down to 2,000 and by the turn of the century only 1,500 remained.

Today, plenty of history remains to be viewed and enjoyed in Bodie, and the town is a great place for area residents or visitors to spend a day or afternoon.

Through Labor Day weekend, Bodie, which is now preserved as a state park, is open from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. Thereafter, it is open from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. An entry fee of $3 per car is required. The park is open year-round, but the road is not plowed during winter.

BODIE STATE
Historical Park

The historic ghost town of Bodie was a struggling mining claim until 1876, when a freak mine cave-in exposed a valuable body of gold. Bodie became a vibrant community containing some 600 to 800 buildings and a population that reached over 10,000.

Bodie is a gold mining ghost town located NE of Lee Vining and SE of Bridgeport, CA and east of the Sierra Nevada. Gold was discovered in 1859, but the town did not reach its heyday until 1877. Bodie's population grew to nearly 10,000 in just four years and began a slow decline in 1881.

By 1935 the town was nearly deserted. When Bodie became a State Historic Park in 1962, only a watchman lived there, guarding its precious treasure of the past. Two major fires have taken their toll and the few remaining buildings are all that is left of the once roaring town!

What to See and Do

Bodie is a ghost town. Today it looks much the same as it did over 50 years ago when the last residents left. A self guiding brochure describing a brief history of each building is available at the Park or by mail (see back). The museum is open from Memorial Day weekend through the end of September, 10 AM to 5:30 PM.

Hours

Memorial Day weekend through Labor Day weekend: 9 AM to 7 PM. The remainder of the year the park is open from 9 AM to 4 PM or as posted. Hours may vary due to weather conditions of the season and are posted at all entrances. **Closure hours are strictly enforced for the protection of structures and artifacts.**

Entrance Fees

Autos - $5.00 (62 and older $4.00); Busses - 10 - 24 passengers $20.00, 25 or more - $40.00 - Dogs - $1.00 (must be on a leash)

Facilities

To preserve the ghost town atmosphere, there are no commercial facilities at Bodie. The only items for sale are the publications listed on the back of this sheet. Be sure to bring plenty of film. Rest rooms are located at the parking lot. Primitive pit toilets are located in the town site and at the picnic area.

Souvenirs and Collecting

Everything in Bodie is part of the historical scene and is fully protected. Nothing may be collected or removed. Metal detectors are not allowed.

Closed Areas

For public protection, certain unstable sections of the Park are posted as prohibited areas, and are closed to entry by park visitors.

Winter Visits

Bodie is open all year. However, because of the high elevation (8,375 ft), it is accessible only by over-snow equipment during the winter months. Many 4-wheel drive vehicles get stuck each year in the snow. Spring thaws bring mud and wheeled vehicles are not advised. **Towing facilities are not available!** Snowmobiles must stay on designated roads within the Park. Winter weather is often unpredictable. Sub-zero temperatures, strong winds and white-out conditions are not uncommon.

How to Get To Bodie

From US 395 take St Rt 270 (7 miles south of Bridgeport) 10 miles east to the end of the pavement and continue 3 more miles on an unsurfaced road to Bodie. The last three miles can be rough. You are encouraged to call the Park if there are any questions on road conditions (647-6445).

CAMPING: There is no camping at Bodie. U.S. Forest Service campgrounds are located near Bridgeport and Lee Vining. For information call:

Bridgeport Ranger Station at (619) 932-7070
Lee Vining Ranger Station at (619) 647-3000
MBNFSA Visitor Center at (619) 647-3044

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT BODIE:

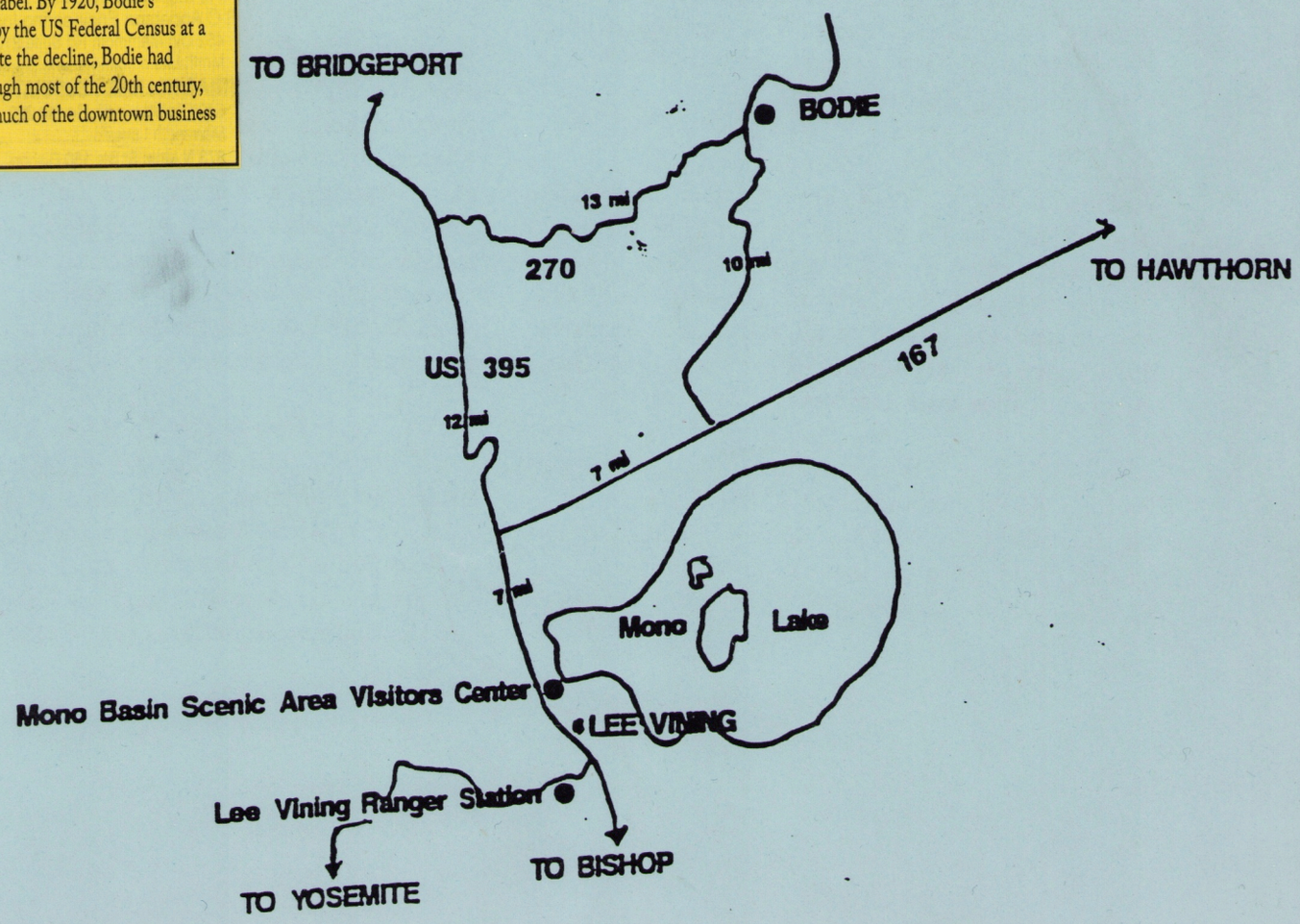
Bodie State Historic Park
P.O. Box 515
Bridgeport, CA 93517
(619) 647-6445

California Department of Parks and Recreation
Sierra District
P.O. Drawer D
Tahoma, CA 95733
(916) 525-7232

The first signs of an official decline occurred in 1912 with the printing of the last Bodie newspaper, The Bodie Miner. In a 1913 book titled California tourist guide and handbook: authentic description of routes of travel and points of interest in California, the authors, Wells and Aubrey Drury described Bodie as a "mining town, which is the center of a large mineral region" and provided reference to two hotels and a railroad operating there. In 1913, the Standard Consolidated Mine closed. Mining profits in 1914 were at a low of $6,821. James S. Cain was buying up everything from the town lots to the mining claims, and reopened the Standard mill to former employees, which resulted in an over $100,000 profit in 1915. However, this financial growth was not in time to stop the town's decline. In 1917, the Bodie Railway was abandoned and its iron tracks were scrapped. The last mine closed in 1942, due to War Production Board order L-208, shutting down all nonessential gold mines in the United States. Mining never resumed.

The first label of Bodie as a "ghost town" was in 1915. In a time when auto travel was on a rise, many were adventuring into Bodie via automobiles. The San Francisco Chronicle published an article in 1919 to dispute the "ghost town" label. By 1920, Bodie's population was recorded by the US Federal Census at a total of 120 people. Despite the decline, Bodie had permanent residents through most of the 20th century, even after a fire ravaged much of the downtown business district in 1932.

GETTING TO BODIE



Bodie: Is Anyone Home?

This California Ghost Town Is Full Of Light, Not Life

1-2-2005

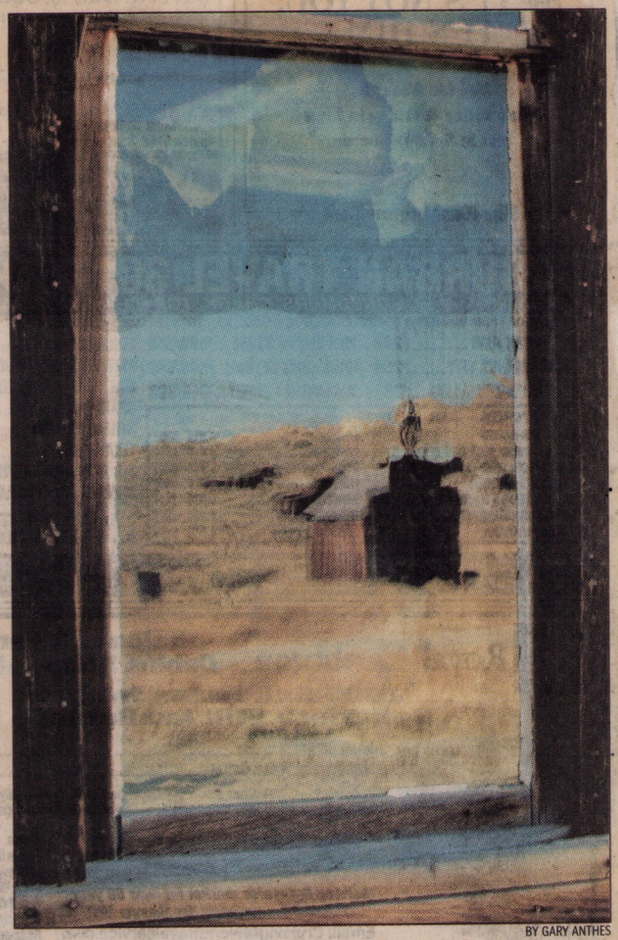
By Gary Anthes
Special to The Washington Post

It seems appropriate that a building in a ghost town should be haunted, and Noella Ballenger insists this one is. It's the former home of Lottie Johl, a Bodie, Calif., prostitute who entertained the town's gold miners in the late 1870s.

Ballenger, a professional photographer who conducts workshops in Bodie, suggests we offer Lottie a greeting as we enter her house. She says we'll suffer unspecified consequences otherwise, so even the skeptics among us say "Hi, Lottie" as we file in.

Ballenger says another workshop leader failed to do that and later discovered on his film a long sequence of blank pictures where images of Lottie's bedroom, kitchen and dining room ought to have been.

You don't have to be superstitious to be moved by the atmosphere in Bodie, billed as the best-preserved ghost town in America.



BY GARY ANTHES

Bodie, Calif., once teeming with gold miners, is now a ghost town that attracts photographers who come for the haunting images.

You sense the vibrations in the earth coming from the old stamping mill, where enormous pistons driven by an eight-ton flywheel crushed gold ore around the clock but now are frozen in rust and time. You imagine the voices of little children reading from a board seen dimly through the Green Street schoolhouse window: "O Sam, see the pretty dog! The little dog has had a nap." And you can just about smell the whiskey in the dusty old bottles that still stand on bars and tables in the deserted saloons around town.

"From the very first time I walked in there it was as though I could hear footsteps, like I could hear echoes from the past," says Ballenger, who has been coming to Bodie for 18 years.

Bodie is most haunting at sunset, when a majority of visitors have left, the shadows march up into the high desert hills and the weathered wood buildings glow orange-red. Brad Sturdivant, who has worked at the ghost town 21 years, explains his love of it this way: "It's the remoteness, the quiet, the wind in the streets."

What was once the third-largest population center in California is now Bodie State Historic Park, maintained in "arrested decay" by supervising ranger Sturdivant, two other park rangers and a cadre of volunteers called the Friends of Bodie. The ghost town, sitting at the end of a 12-mile partially paved side road, is easy to overlook on your way to Lake Tahoe, 100 miles north, or to Yosemite National Park, 40 miles west over the Sierra Nevada Mountains. It can be crowded on summer weekends, but it's nearly deserted the two weekdays I am there in early October.

Gold was discovered in the area in 1859 by W. S. Bodey (later mysteriously changed to Bodie). He was caught in a blizzard that year and froze to death, but in 1862 a mining camp at the site was established and named after him. A series of gold discoveries resulted in a wave of fortune seekers, and by 1879, miners, occasionally with families, were arriving at the rate of 30 a day.

"Goodbye, God; we are going to Bodie in the morning," a little girl in San Jose, Calif., reportedly wrote in her diary that year. Marguerite Sprague says in the historical account "Bodie's Gold" that the Bodie Standard newspaper replied in an editorial, "All right, pardner, but we have no particular use here for a god that confines himself to the limits of San Jose."

That pretty well sums up the moral climate in Bodie at the time, where every other building seems to have housed a saloon, dance hall, gambling hall, place of prostitution or opium den. Gun duels in the streets, and deaths from them, were common. The Bodie State Historic Park brochure says the town was "second to none for wickedness, bad men and 'the worst climate out of doors'," and it quotes a Rev. F.M. Warrington as calling Bodie in 1881 "a sea of sin, lashed by the tempests of lust and passion."

But Bodie's days of sin, and wealth, were brief. As gold declined, so did the population, falling from 10,000 in 1879 to less than 1,000 by 1900. The population continued to sink, approaching zero in 1942 when the federal government halted what little remained of mining because of the war. Bodie became a state park in 1962 and has been protected ever since.

The people who abandoned Bodie generally left with whatever possessions could be carried in a wagon or a two-wheeled cart pulled by a horse. A great deal stayed behind—clothes hanging on bedroom walls, dishes on kitchen tables, beer bottles on bars, boxes of gunpowder on store shelves—where it remains mostly undisturbed today.

The tiniest details are evocative. I'm oddly charmed by an ancient Puss 'n Boots cat food can lying open on a kitchen chair, surrounded by mouse droppings.

I'm reminded of the work of photographer Deborah Turbeville, who in 1980 photographed rooms at Versailles that had been left undisturbed and closed to the public since the 18th century. "These rooms have ceased to discriminate between matter, determining that all things past are of equal value in narration," she writes in her book, "Unseen Versailles." "All recall an earlier hour more vivid with life."

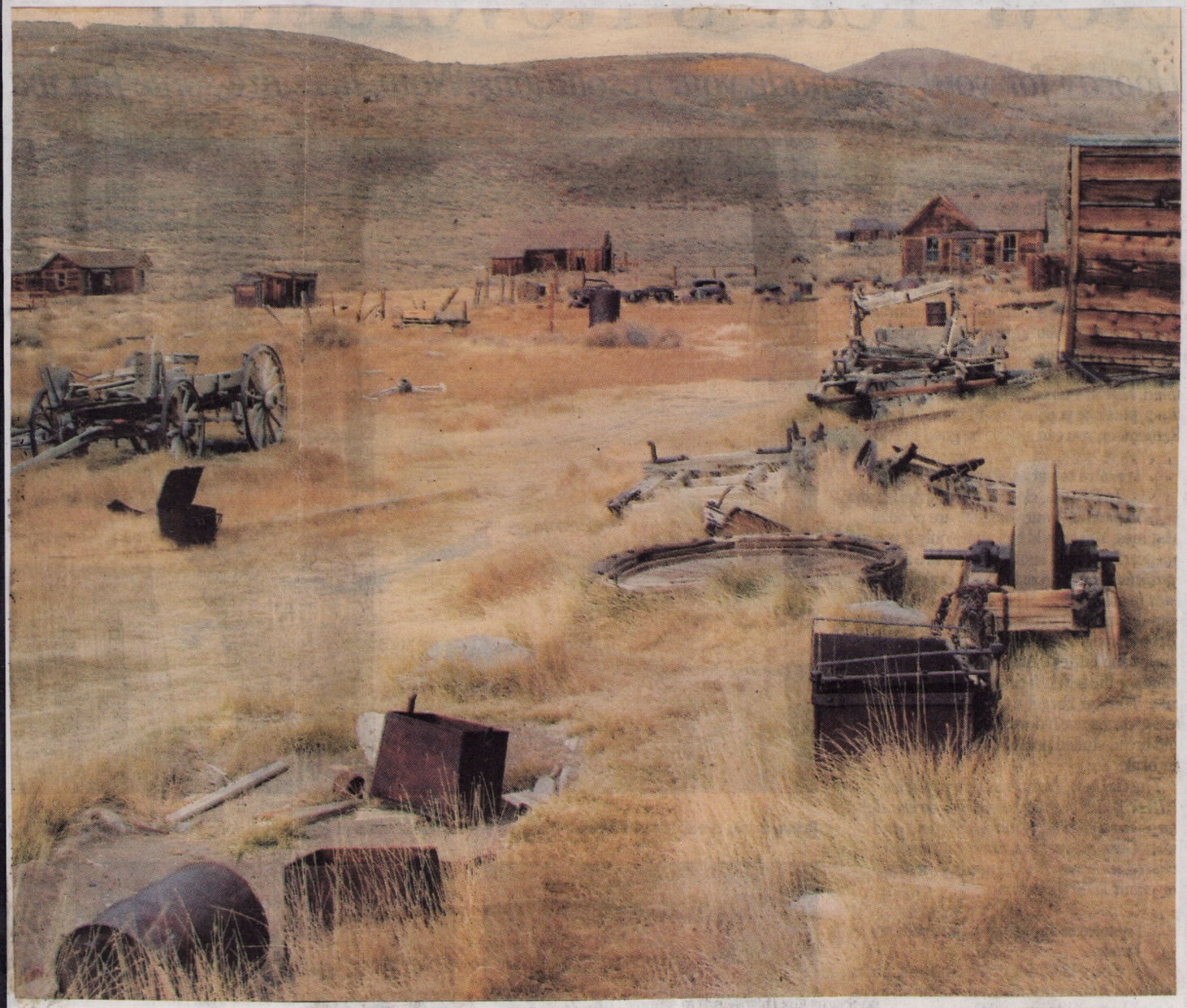
Indeed, nearly everything in Bodie is authentic. No Disney recreations here, no souvenir shops selling fake gold-nugget key chains, no guides in cute Western outfits, no snack bars. Although there are modern restrooms in the parking lot at the edge of town, the central facilities off Main Street are outhouses with pit toilets. Streets are paved with dust, and primitive paths connecting the more remote buildings are littered with broken glass and rusted objects of uncertain identity.

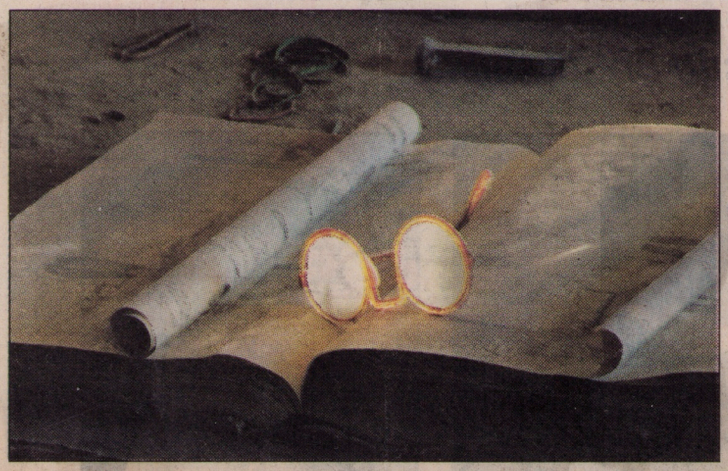
The authentic Wild West roughness makes the town a photographer's dream. Most of the buildings are closed to the public, except to workshops put on by approved photographers. But a great deal can be seen and photographed through windows. And there is much to shoot outdoors—the dilapidated old wood exteriors, buildings so fragile some are propped up with big wooden poles, automobiles rusting into the ground, mining paraphernalia, tools, vintage wagons and so on. Park contractors selectively patch roofs, shore up walls and foundations, and replace parts of buildings as they fail, always careful to preserve the original look. Sturdivant says renovations can go on indefinitely, but it's hard to believe Bodie won't be substantially diminished in another 50 years. There are 170 buildings in Bodie, with a lot of "decay" to "arrest," and a limited budget.

As Turbeville said of the ghost palace Versailles, "The past is restless. It is here for a moment. Turn, and look quickly."

So don't bypass Bodie for Lake Tahoe. Trim your visit to Yosemite if you must. Bring lunch and water and twice as much film as you think you'll need.

And don't forget to say hi to Lottie.





A pair of glasses sit at the Boone Store in Bodie, Calif.

$ BODIE $

Will pay top dollar
for any items from
Bodie.
*Objects*Papers*
Photos
Call (714) 879-3694
Ask for Greg

Secrets of Bodie

Guided tours illuminate California's loveliest ghost town

By Lora J. Finnegan

July 2000

One of Bodie's best-preserved buildings—the stately Methodist Church.

"Bodie saw her glory years from 1877 to 1882, when the town burst with up to 10,000 people, all dreaming of getting rich from the gold mines," says guide Christine Spiller as she stands on the rickety steps of the 1882 Methodist Church in Bodie State Historic Park. Set east of the Sierra Nevada on the edge of the Great Basin, amid a sea of sage, this is perhaps the most remarkable ghost town in California—extensive and well preserved. It's big enough, in fact, that you need help to really appreciate it. Tours help unlock Bodie's secrets.

On this blindingly bright summer day, the wind whips at Spiller's long period skirt and blows tumbleweeds down the streets. The town she walks us through today, with more than 170 structures, represents a fraction of boomtown Bodie.

"Main Street was a mile long, with wall-to-wall buildings," notes Spiller, her footsteps echoing on the weathered boardwalk. "There were about 65 saloons. On a Saturday night, you would have heard gunshots, breaking glass, piano music—all set against the ever-present din of the ore stamp mills on the hill."

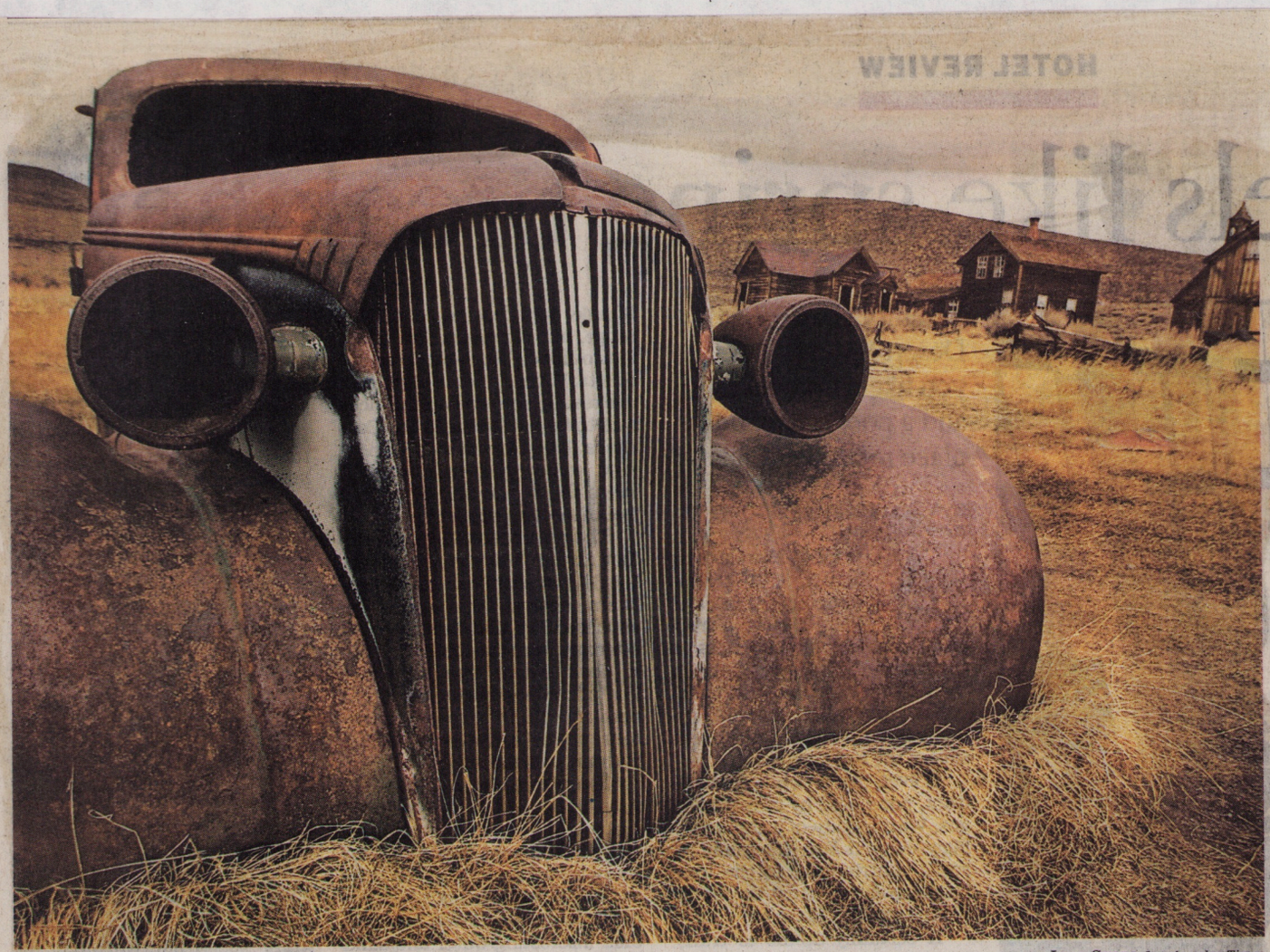
Down the street from the church, we peer into the Boone Store on Main, where preserved boxes for Ghirardelli ground chocolate sit by Boss of the Road overalls. Around the corner on Green Street, looking into the schoolhouse windows, we see primers covered with dust, a flag hanging limp, a delicate pen in an inkwell. It looks as if the students simply stepped out for recess and never returned. "Look through Bodie's windows and you get a fascinating picture of how these people lived," Spiller says.

Over the years, the mines played out, and fires and neglect took their toll on Bodie. A wealth of now-historic artifacts had already been abandoned by the fire of 1932, when most of the town's remaining residents departed. "When they left, people took what belongings they could carry," says Spiller, "and most moved on to the next job or mining strike as fast as they could."

Newly acquired land preserves ghostly vistas

The arid climate and isolated locale helped to minimize the deterioration and vandalism other ghost towns faced. Today the park's mandate is to maintain the buildings in a state of "arrested decay," with a crew working each summer to stabilize buildings.

Organized by the nonprofit Friends of Bodie, the walking tours highlight Bodie history. One tour winds its way to a stamp mill (the Standard Consolidated Mill); the other, called the Historic Mining District Tour, ends up on a ridge near a mine shaft (now closed for safety reasons). The ridge has only recently been added to the park, thanks to a conservation effort that purchased a 517-acre tract (saving it from becoming a noisy open pit mine). "When you're up there gazing down on the town, you get a fresh perspective on Bodie," Spiller claims. Indeed, from this height, you see a poignantly beautiful ruin of a town, swallows darting about her rooftops, her wood walls bleached golden by the high-desert sun.



LUIS SINCO *Los Angeles Times*

BODIE'S CURSE: *Visitors to Bodie State Historic Park in the Eastern Sierras say taking "souvenirs" has dire consequences.*

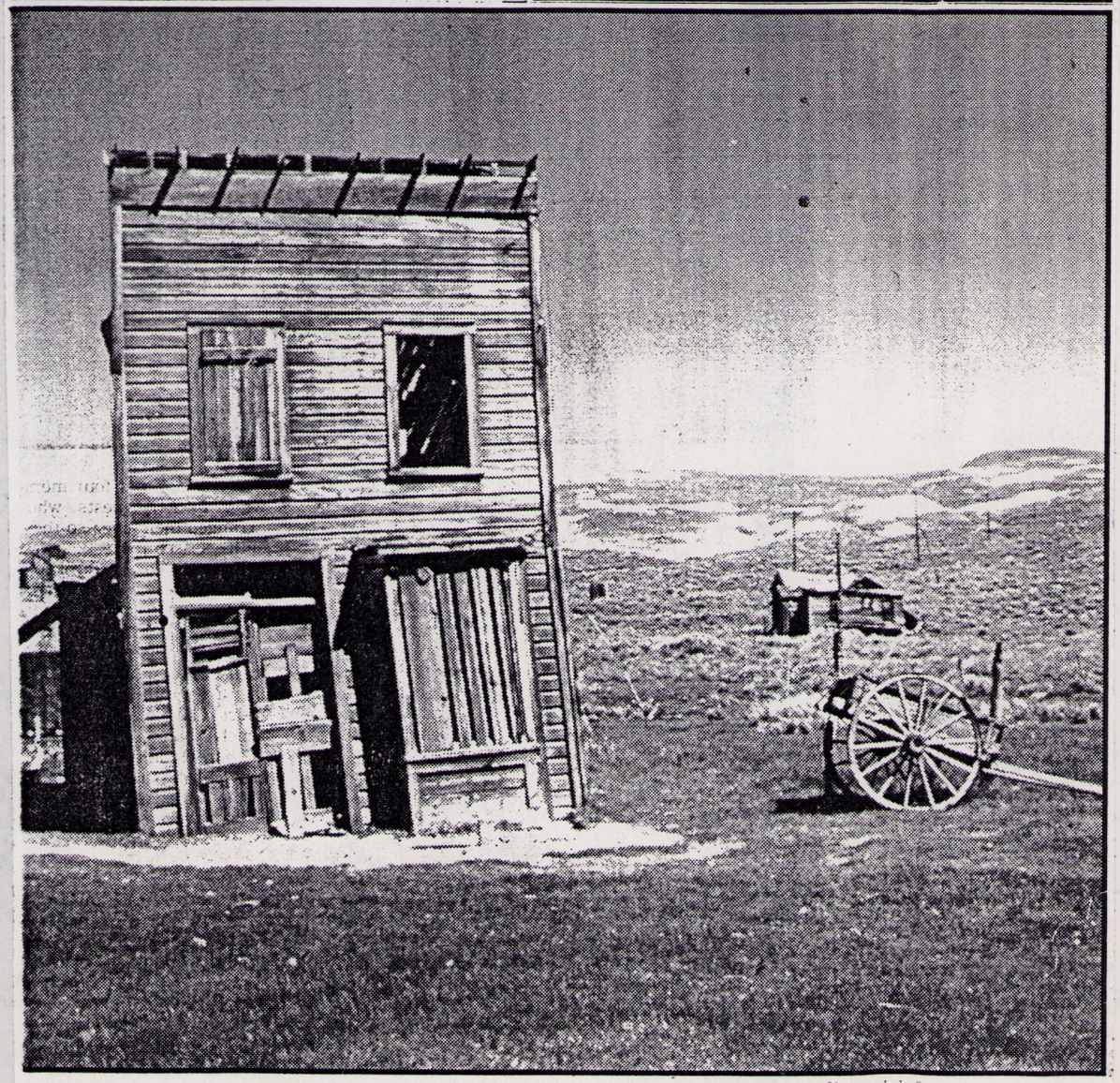
Spirits of the West

Headless Hooch, roving Annabelle and others keep ghost towns lively.

By HUGO MARTÍN
Times Staff Writer

DUSTY whiskey bottles line warped shelves. Dog-eared hymnals rest in church pews. Framed black-and-white photos, veiled in spider webs, hang on crooked nails. The ghost towns of the American West recall a desperate era. Located on high plains and open deserts, where sand storms and cold winter nights have embalmed any semblance of life, these towns still whisper their legends to anyone willing to drive through and listen. ¶ Pull over and step outside, and you'll hear the stories of the men, the women and the children who abandoned their homes and gave up their claims so fast that they seem to have vanished mid-stride and mid-sentence. As Halloween nears, they seem more than eager to speak.

Rough-and-tumble Bodie, Calif.



OVER

LIFE in the West's rough-and-tumble mining camps didn't get much harsher than in Bodie, Calif., a treeless, wind-whipped site some 8,500 feet above sea level on the east slope of the Sierra Nevadas. The lure of gold brought hard-rock miners, drifters and toughs to a town that once boasted a population as high as 10,000 at its peak in the early 1880's.

A tinsmith-turned-prospector, Waterman S. Bodey, a native of Poughkeepsie, N.Y., discovered gold here in 1859 but died in a winter snowstorm and never saw the town that was named for him. (His name was often misspelled; Bodie was the form favored by the town's founders). His remains weren't found until the next spring.

By most accounts, Bodie was one of the wildest towns in the Wild West, producing the legendary "bad man from Bodie," violence among idle miners addicted to opium, and about $100 million worth of gold. The peak boom period lasted only three years, beginning in the fall of 1877 and ending in the summer of 1881. After that, historians say, the decline was rapid, although several mines continued to produce and many people hung on.

Early-day news accounts tell of a young girl, en route to the remote town with her family, writing in her diary: "Goodbye God, I'm going to Bodie." Town boosters, so the story goes, turned the phrase around, maintaining that she really meant: "Good, by God, I'm going to Bodie."

Only a fragment of Bodie remains, preserved in "arrested decay" as a California State Historic Park at the end of 10 miles of pavement and 3 miles of gravel road running east of Route 395 just south of Bridgeport near the Nevada line. Standing are more than 170 buildings such as hotels, a schoolhouse, church and union hall, as well as twisted and tilted shacks and outhouses. Enough remains for visitors to get both a glimpse of camp life and an eerie sense of this true ghost town.

A few of the buildings are open, such as the Miners' Union Hall on Main Street, which doubles as a visitors' center and small museum filled with bits and pieces of Bodie history, books and pamphlets on the town and even two hearses. In the visitors' center, a small sign warns of the bad luck that can follow anyone who picks up old cans, bottles, square nails or other artifacts found lying in the dirt in what is one of the best preserved ghost towns in the West.

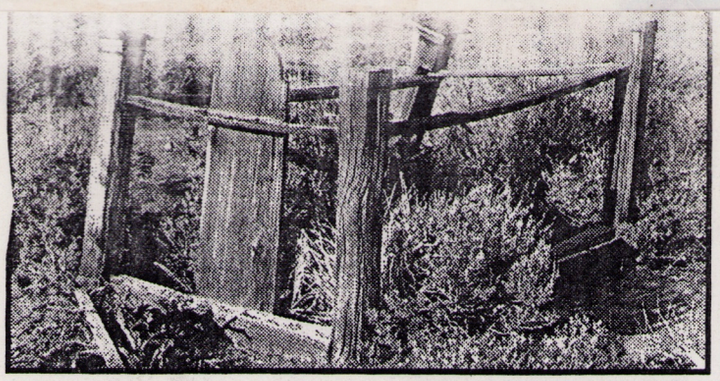
Others buildings are locked, but one can peek through uncurtained windows and see tables, chairs and beds abandoned by departing townsfolk. Children's drawings are still pinned on the walls of the old schoolhouse on Green Street. Books are on the desks, and teachers' lessons on the chalkboard.

The old Methodist Church, also on Green Street, was built in 1882, when the camp's lawless days were nearly over — and after a local reporter suggested that "a general improvement in morals would not be out of place."

On the corner of Green and Main, visitors can peer into Boone's store and see housewares, drugstore items, a paint display, a mannequin and other merchandise. Parked outside, next to an old gasoline pump, is a 1927 Dodge-Graham truck, the most modern piece of equipment visible in the town. (Visitors' cars aren't allowed on the dirt streets; they must be parked in a lot just west of town.)

Across the street from Boone's stands the Wheaton and Hollis Hotel. A battered, dusty pool table and bar can be seen in the lobby, and iron beds and old mattresses are visible through other windows.

Visitors who look through the ground-floor



Jay Aldrich for the New York Times

Tombstone on the edge of Bodie, Calif.

Continued From Page 14

Main Street can see an old mail-sorting box used by the postmaster. His office moved from one location to another over the years — usually to smaller and smaller spots as the town dwindled.

Halfway up Bodie Bluff on the northeast side of the town is the Standard Mill, the most imposing structure visible from Main Street. The mill was rebuilt after a fire in 1899 and still contains almost all the machinery needed to process ore. Also standing, on a saddle east of town, is the Bodie railroad station, the terminus of a 31-mile-long narrow-gauge railroad completed mainly with Chinese labor in 1881. Old carriages, still in good repair, survive in a few barns around town. Freight wagons, their iron wheels rusting and wood frames rotting, stand unprotected outside.

In its heyday, around 1878, Bodie had almost 50 saloons, as many brothels and dance halls, a dozen lawyers, a few doctors, twice-daily stagecoach service, several newspapers, a score of restaurants, several hotels and a telegraph line to Genoa, Nev., about 95 miles to the north. There were more than 600 buildings and Main Street was a mile long; today the section with buildings on it is less than half that. By 1885, census figures showed the population was 6,000, although local newspapers and some historians put the figure as high as 10,000.

By then the first signs of an economic decline were apparent. Real estate sales slumped, and abandoned houses and vacancy signs were common. Gold strikes in Arizona and Idaho siphoned off many miners in the late 1870's and the 1880's, and by 1890 only two mines were still operating and only 15 of the camp's total of 160 stamp mills were being used.

A fire in 1892 destroyed much of Bodie, but many of the buildings were replaced or rebuilt. One of the town's principal property owners in the 1890's, J. S. Cain, and others helped to keep the town going by processing low-grade ore and building a hydroelectric dam to bring in power that cut mining costs.

By the 1920's the town was looking more and more like a ghost, with fewer than 100 residents. The rails and rolling stock of the Mono Lake Railway and Lumber Company were dismantled and sold for scrap, and mining activity was small-scale and intermittent.

Another major fire in 1932 destroyed most of the buildings, including such landmarks as the post office, the U. S. Hotel and Occidental Hotel and the Bodie Bank. Much of what was left behind remains standing today.

Cain's home was spared, but his land was exhausted. In 1935 he leased his mining property and moved to San Francisco. His family hired a caretaker to look after the house and the land until it became a state park in 1962. The "arrested decay" concept used by the California Department of Parks and Recreation calls for more beams and braces to keep the remaining buildings just as they are, unrestored and without any commercial improvements. New shingles are necessary from time to time as protection from the weather.

Bodie's high elevation accounts for radical extremes of hot and cold in winter and summer. Summer temperatures can exceed 100 degrees. Winter snows can be as deep as 10 feet, and last winter temperatures dropped to 30 degrees below zero.

The harsh conditions have peeled away almost all the paint on buildings, leaving behind bare wood walls — and a few brick buildings — that get so pummeled by the elements that log braces have been used on the leeward sides of many to keep them from collapsing.

THE unspoiled nature of Bodie may not last. The gold deposits discovered in 1859 have attracted miners again, and test drilling is already under way to see whether the bluff above town may yield more fortunes.

A park ranger, Jack Shipley, says as many as 15 of the old buildings still standing on Bodie Bluff might be razed should Galactic Resources, based in Vancouver, renew mining there. If standard, modern-day earth-moving methods are used, much of the bluff might disappear. Even if the company goes no further than testing, the faint sounds of drilling and the rumble of an occasional mine truck is enough to disturb the reverie that Mr. Shipley has come to treasure during his six years in Bodie. "If they start mining, it would be busy and noisy all the time," he said, brushing a fine layer of ever-present Bodie dust from a stack of pamphlets in the park office in Cain's home. ■

BODIE A FIRST-HAND TALE

by Victor Larson

Victor H. Larson, from a photograph taken in front of his grandmother's boarding house in Bodie. Donna S. Strong collection

Victor H. Larson wrote down many memories of his life in Antelope Valley in northern Mono County. His father, Wood Larson, who came to the area as a pioneer from Norway, appears on the cover. Donna S. Strong, Victor Larson's daughter, shares his stories in this and future issues.

Bodie. Chalfant Press photo

In years gone by, much was written and told of Bodie, now but a deserted Ghost Town. The cemetery there was always referred to as Boot Town, owing to the fact that so many men were killed with their boots on over a card game or saloon brawls. Bad men all over the west were often referred to as "The bad men from Bodie." So it was during the boom days when the population was near 10,000. Gamblers and crooks all over the west seem to flock there to fleece the miners of their weekly pay. Bodie was said to be the wickedest town according to population and had the distinction of being the highest elevated city in the United States, being, I believe, over 10,000 feet. Freight was hauled by jerk-line teams, mostly eight or twelve horses from Carson City 100 miles away. The teamsters had good pickings as well as the farmers 50 to 75 miles away. The quartz mills as well as the hoists were all run by steam and the woodcutters did a profitable business supplying the mines and residents. All freight had to be hauled from Carson City and the old Virginia and Truckee Railroad was doing well. At that there seemed to be rivalry between Carson and Bodie. More than half of the people arriving on the railroad would stay in Carson only long enough to get the stage for Bodie.

***The Carson Appeal** was run by Sam Davis, a noted jester and the **Bodie Miner Index** was run by an equal jester, Jim Townsend, and many quips were exchanged by the two rivals. At the time The Appeal printed an article saying that a refined religious girl decided to go to Bodie, but before leaving and she thinking of changing her habits, knelt down and made a fervent prayer, then said, "Now, goodbye God! I'm going to Bodie."*

*In the next issue of the **Bodie Miner Index,** Townsend quoted the girl as saying those exact words but in a different vein as follows: "Good! By God I'm going to Bodie." Then commented: "This she said as she thought of leaving the sleepy town of Carson to go to the roaring town of Bodie."*

My Grandmother Johnson went to Bodie and built a rooming house in 1876, and my Uncle Billie Owens went there sometime later, rooming with Grandmother. He was a battery man at the Standard Mill for many years. The quartz mills ran day and night, 365 days of the year. There were so many shooting

A Bodie bar today. Chalfant Press photo

scraps that it was a common saying that the undertaker got a man before breakfast every morning. There was no law prohibiting carrying fire arms and a man seldom sat down at a card game without a six-shooter in his holster. Many times the professional gambler would graciously order the drinks to stupify his opponent, having made arrangements with an unscrupulous bartender to spike the drinks and share the winnings.

In late summer of 1881, Father had driven to Bodie with farm produce and he expected to make frequent trips. Grandmother prevailed on him to bring one of us older children to stay with her for awhile.

I was nearing nine years of age at the time and it was decided I should go. I vividly recall while there of two men being killed and taken to boot town. While on this trip to Bodie I wore a pair of red top coppered-toed boots. The first night, we stopped at Frost Station on Little Walker River. I recall that we were treated to fresh trout both for supper and breakfast. That morning, after Father had his horses hitched to the wagon and gone up to pay his bill, Charlie Frost, a boy two years older than I threw me down, took my boots off and tossed them on a long, high stable and then hid away. Father, having no ladder, drove the loaded wagon near the shed and by standing on the high spring seat retrieved my boots.

Father, on reaching Bodie, soon sold his produce and returned home. One morning, while I was there, Uncle Bill came in from his night shift and said; "Don't wait breakfast for me, Mother. I met the coroner and I stopped for an eye-opener at a certain saloon. The coroner and the constable were just locking the place. I am to serve on a coroner's jury." He changed his work clothes and was gone for several hours. Upon his return, he stated that there was a shooting scrape, that two men had shot it out and both were killed. One man had eight bullets in him and three different caliber bullets were taken from him, one a forty-four. A forty-four pistol was found behind the bar with one empty shell, denoting that the bartender had fired one shot. All witnesses in the saloon remained dumb, and this affair was just one of many but were hardly any different where four men were shooting at once. ♣

Bodie's main street today, west side, bar at left. Chalfant Press photo

VICTOR
LARSON
&
WILL OWENS

IN FRONT OF BANK
VAULT AFTER BODIE
FIRE OF 1932

INDEPENDENT ORDER OF ODD FELLOWS

$1.5 Bodie Calif, Apr 25 1905

This Certifies that Laetitia Larson

WHOSE SIGNATURE APPEARS IN THE MARGIN HEREOF

HAS PAID To Mila REBEKAH LODGE No. 240 I.O.O.F.

of Bodie Jurisdiction of Calif.

the sum of Ninety 50/100 Dollars

in full for all charges to October 1st 1905

SEAL

Elizabeth Sturgeon NOBLE GRAND | Claire E. Johnson SECRETARY

OFFICIAL CERTIFICATE

DESIGN PATENTED BY THE SOVEREIGN GRAND LODGE, JUNE 7TH 1898. A. HOEN & CO. BALTIMORE.

If not delivered within TEN DAYS, Return to
SECRETARY OF
Mila Rebekah Lodge, No. 240,
I. O. O. F.
BODIE, MONO CO., - CAL.

BOD
MA
3
1905
CAL

Mrs Laetitia Larson
Bishop
Calif.

REBEKAH WITHDRAWAL CARD.

Friendship, Love, and Truth.

INDEPENDENT ORDER OF ODD FELLOWS.

To all whom it may concern:

This Certifies, That our well-beloved Sister Laetitia Larson whose name is written on the margin of this Card in her own proper handwriting, was regularly admitted a member of our Lodge, by Initiation, on the 17 day of December 1901, and has paid all demands against her up to this date, and is under no charge whatever. We therefore recommend her to your **FRIENDSHIP** and **PROTECTION,** and admission into any regular **REBEKAH LODGE** of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows to which she may apply, within ONE YEAR from the date hereof.

This Card is granted by W. A. **REBEKAH LODGE,** No. 240, which was duly instituted at Bodie on the 28 day of December 1899, by authority of the **Grand Lodge** of California

In Witness Whereof, we subscribe hereto our hands and affix the seal of our Lodge, this 24 day of October in the year one thousand nine hundred and five.

Mary Quinville N.G.

Adelaide M. Roop Secretary.

Grand Secretary.

Laetitia Larson

THE DEAD AND EDUCATE THE ORPHAN WE COMMAND YOU TO VISIT THE SICK RELIEVE THE DISTRESSED BURY

THE SOVEREIGN GRAND LODGE OF THE INDEPENDENT ORDER OF ODD FELLOWS 1834.

The Friedenwald Co. Balto.

After the name, the title, P.N.G., P.V.G., or whatever office the member may have filled must be added.

Bodie School

Different picture of school
on page 149 of "Bodie's Gold"
by Marguerite Sprague 2003

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA
IN AND FOR THE COUNTY OF MONO.

In the Matter of the Estate of)
WILLIAM T. OWENS, Deceased.) Probate No. 422

NOTICE BY CLERK OF DAY FIXED FOR HEARING
RETURN OF SALE OF REAL ESTATE.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that A. E. Dolan, administrator of the estate of William T. Owens, deceased, has made to the said Court and filed in the office of the clerk thereof a return of sale made by him on the 21st day of May, 1934, of the following real estate for the following sum, to wit:

Lots No. 23 and 24 in Block 11, Bodie, California, together with all improvements thereon and the appurtenances thereunto belonging.

That the hereinbefore described interest in said real estate was sold to D. C. Honea for the sum of $50.50, as will more fully appear from said return filed as aforesaid, to which reference is hereby made for further particulars.

And notice is hereby given that Monday, the 18th day of June, 1934, at ten o'clock A. M., at the Courtroom of said Court, at the Courthouse, in the Town of Bridgeport, County of Mono, State of California, has been fixed for hearing the said return, when and where any person interested in the said estate may appear and file written objections to the confirmation of the said sale, and may be heard and may produce witnesses in support of his objections.

Dated June 6, 1934.

Geo C Delury Jr
Clerk

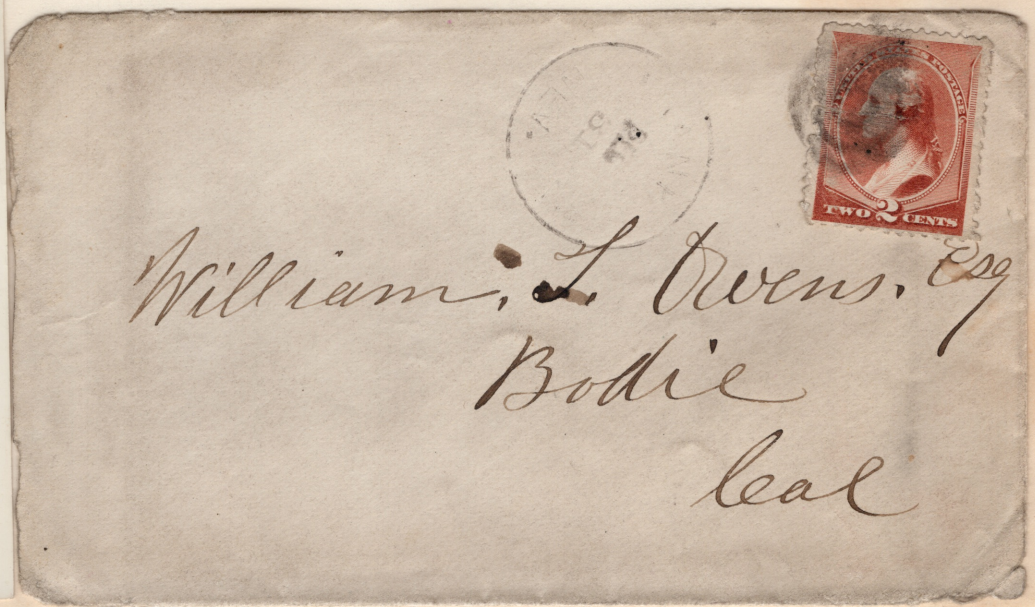
The foregoing instrument is a full, true and correct copy of the original on file in this office.

Attest AUG 19 1965 19
ANN M. WEBB, County Clerk and Clerk of the Superior Court, of the State of California, in and for the County of Mono

By Lorraine A. Hardesty Deputy

View of Bodie, California, Taken by Arthur E. Larson
about 1900.
Grandmother Johnson's Lodging House was in West Bodie
In 1956 only the privy remained. The house
had been taken to Mono Mills, California

Will Owens Bodie



Victor H Larson - W. T. Owens in Bodie 1932.

Bodie Cemetery

The Lives Within

The Friends of Bodie

The Friends of Bodie is a chapter of the Sierra State Parks Foundation, which is a non-profit organization. The Friends of Bodie is dedicated to the preservation and interpretation of the ghost town of Bodie. Many of the stones in the cemetery are missing due to theft, vandalism and weather, but The Friends of Bodie is working to prevent that in the future.

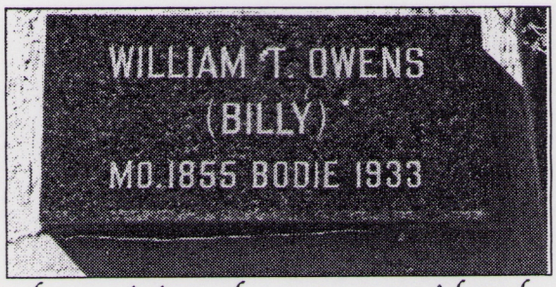
For more information, contact:
The Friends of Bodie
P.O. Box 515
Bridgeport, CA 93517
(760) 647-6564
www.friendsofbodie.org

The FRIENDS OF BODIE

- Please do not desecrate or disturb the graves.
- Do not touch or lean on the markers.
- Stay on designated paths.

Robert Wood Larson Senior purchased marker ~~for William T. Owens~~ in Salinas, ~~California~~ and installed it at Bodie California. Bodie had just been made a Calif State Park. Someone Reported That that Robert Wood Larson Senior was digging in the cemetery. A Ranger Rushed up to catch a grave robber after talking to Robert he said he would remove the wooden form after the cement that Robert mixed had hardened.

17. William T. Owens, "Billy"
Born Missouri 1855 – Died Bodie 1933
Owens was one of the last undertakers in town. A talent-

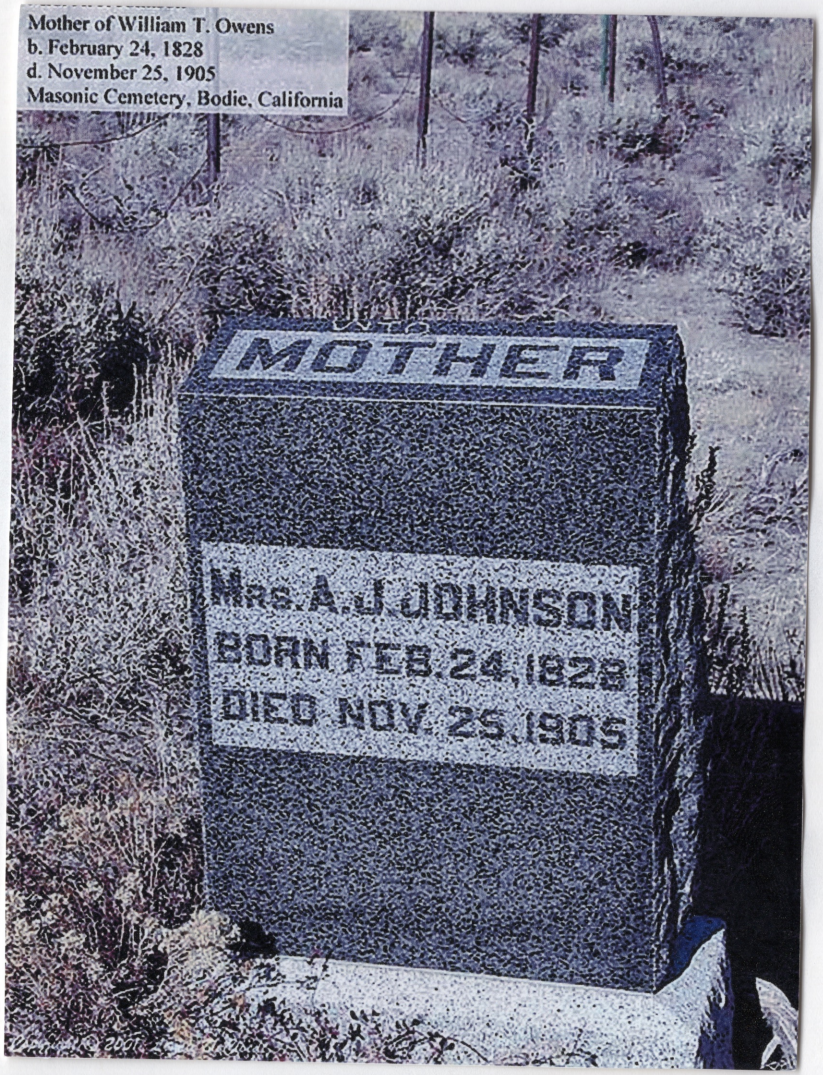


ed musician, he was considered the life of the party and often dressed in top hat and tails. Children enjoyed his company and listened eagerly to his tales of the old days. He enjoyed his evenings at the Bodie saloon and would be seen in early morning hours heading home with his lantern still lit. That earned him the nickname, "Daylight Billy." On the 1930 census, at age 75, his occupation was listed as "laborer – odd jobs."

18. Mrs. A.J. Johnson
Feb. 24, 1828 – Nov. 25, 1905
Arminda Johnson, mother of William T. Owens (17), was born in Missouri.

Go downhill

19. Wood Larson
Died Sept. 29, 1900. Aged 66 yrs, 7 mos. 18 days
At rest in loving remembrance
Died while visiting Bodie.
Son-in-law to Mrs. A.J. Johnson (18)

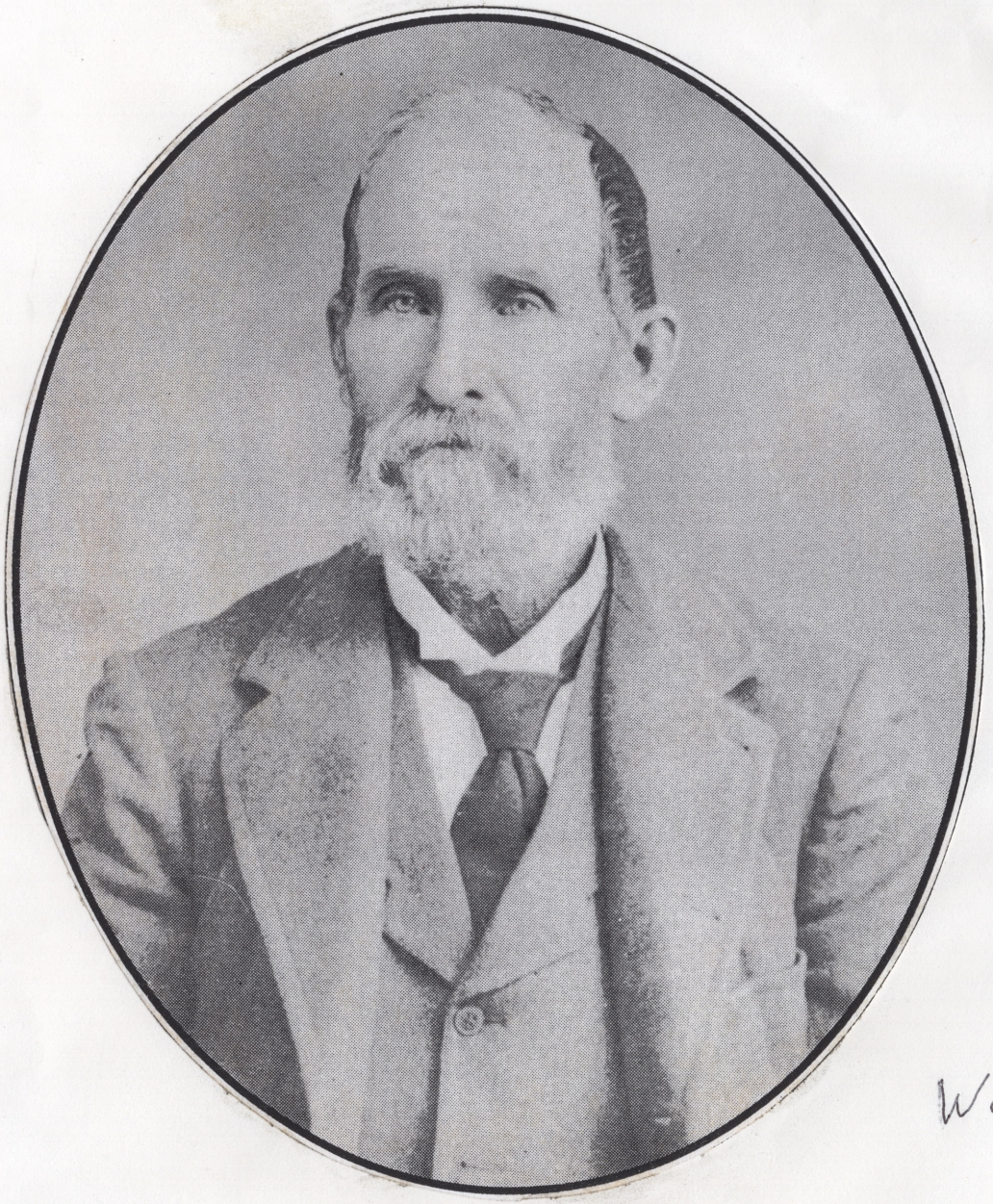


W+O on top of stone shows
where William T. Owens grave is

Araminta Jane Lewellen Owens Johnson

Known in Bodie
as "Grandma Johnson"

Mother To: T. Frank Owens
William T. Owens
Mary Jane Owens Larson



on-in-law to Mrs. A. J. Johnson
ied while visiting Bodie
February 11, 1834
September 29, 1900
lasonic Cemetery, Bodie, California

Wood Larson

Bodie. Mono Co. Cal.
July 17th 1887.

Mrs Sarephta E Bibb.

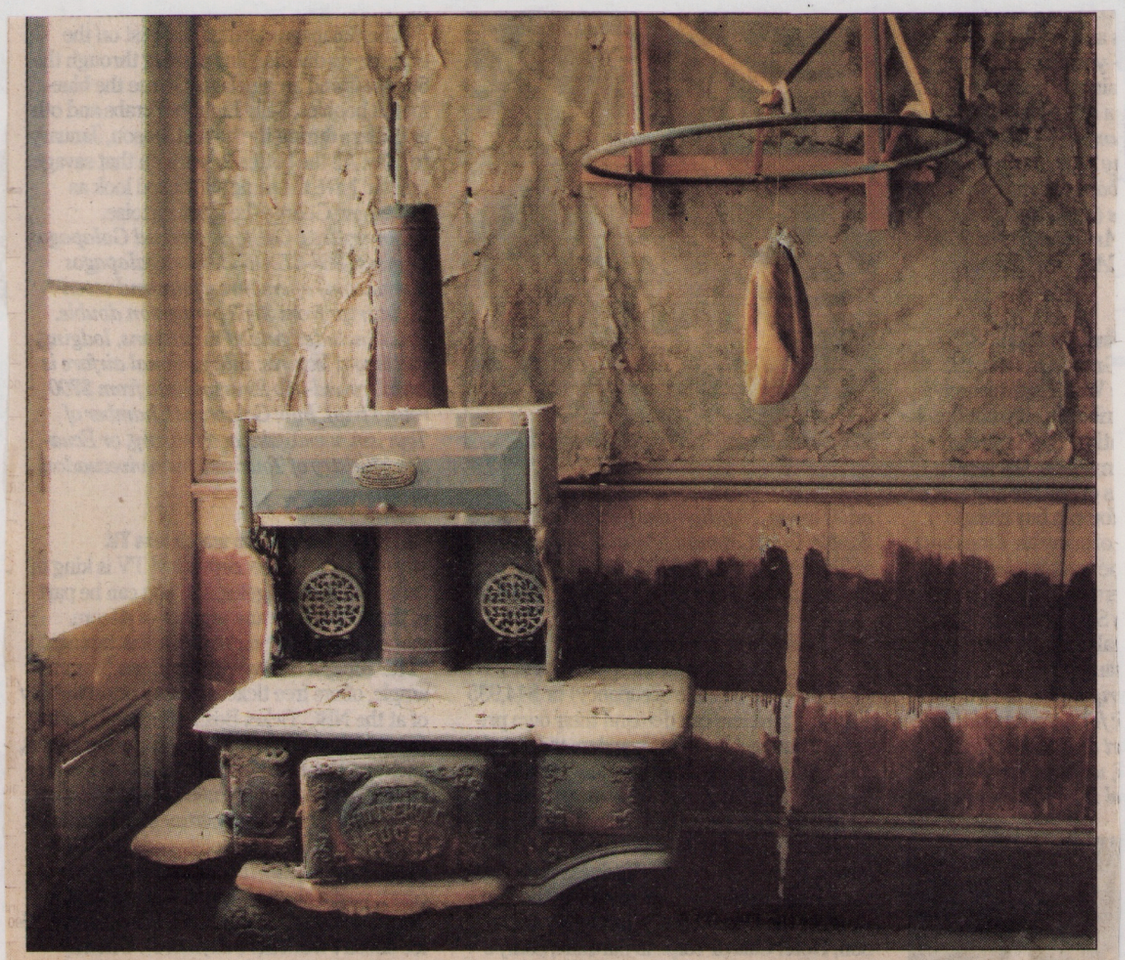
Ever Dear Sister

I receved your kind and welcome; but Sad letter I was Sorry to hear of your great loss but it is his gane in a better world than this. and it is Gods will and we must meekly Obey and submit to his will in all things better is the day of our death, than our birth for it is the end of all things so if our Friends are prepared to meet there Savior we should not greave for them.

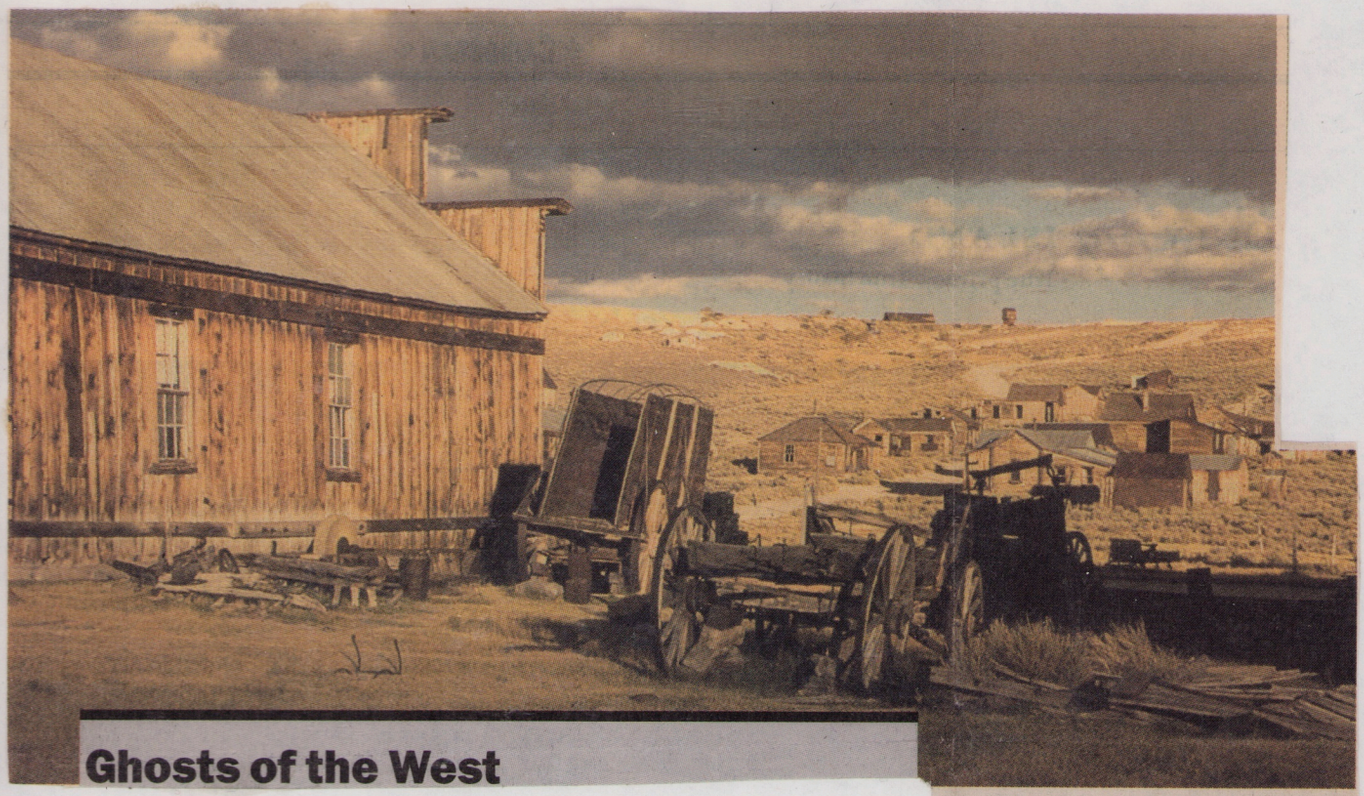
I am sorry to hear Daniess is in bad health. and i am glad to hear Mother is well. as for advising you what to do i donot. know how you are Situated you had better advise with Jacob or Boby Trabue they can tell you better than me as they are there and know how you are Situated Put your trust in god and do the best you can and you will bee all rite, dont werry

those children you have rased it is there
duty to attend to you and advise you in
all things. i have had much sorrow
in this world and none to comfort me but my
Savior. so i tell you to go to him.

Janeys health is not very good
I wish i new what to write you but i dont
there is a man and his wife living with
Frank they are all well Will is
not married yet. I wish you all
could come and see me write to me
and tell me all you know
times is very hard here and I have
not made any thing for over three years
i would like to sell out here but
i cant the town is gone down so
i hope this will find you all well
give Mother my best wishes and love
and kiss her for me, an tell her to
remember me in her prays, for i know
the good Lord will hear her, bless her
dear Sod. dear Sister remember me in
your prays, and may God bless and comfort
you and direct you a rite in all things
my love to you all, good nite from
your poor sister Araminta J. Johnson

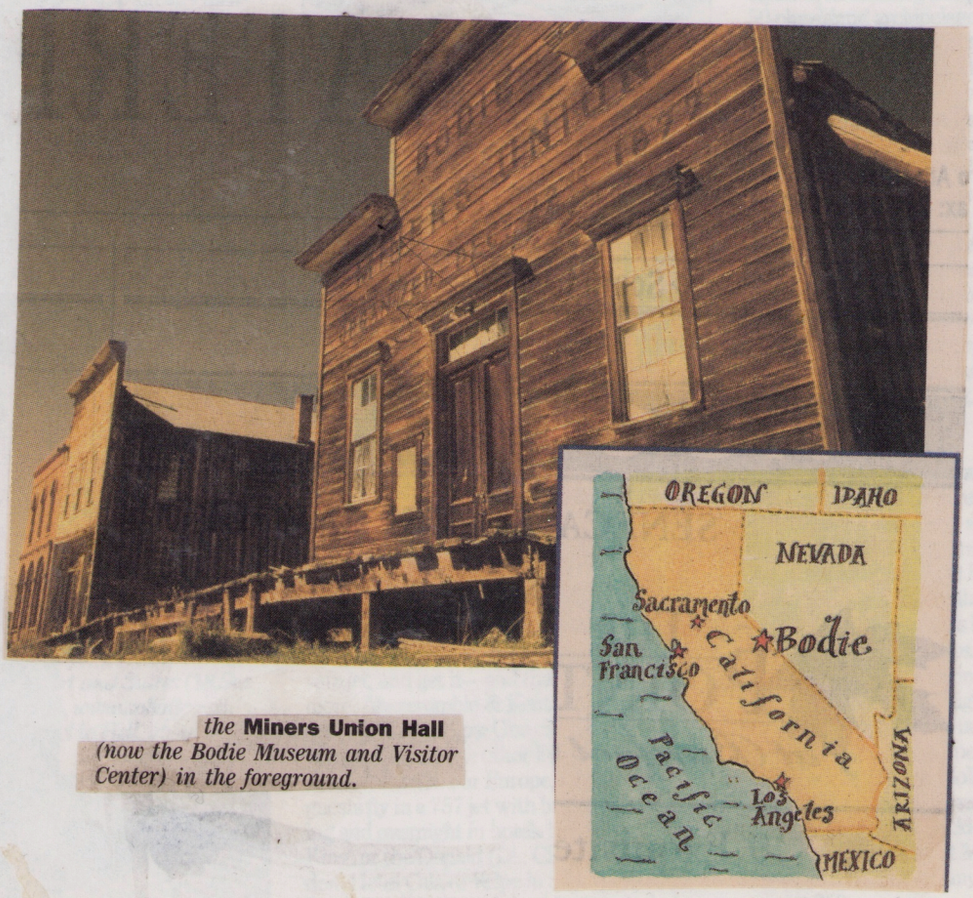


Bodie State Historic Park hosts photo workshops that focus on such well-preserved buildings as Odd Fellows Lodge.



Ghosts of the West

Above, Bodie's **Green Street,** *with the town's water tower and train station in the distance;*



the **Miners Union Hall** *(now the Bodie Museum and Visitor Center) in the foreground.*

Snapshots From A Ghost Town

Bodie's unrestored buildings are propped up to prevent collapse

SURVEY THE RUINS OF A TRUE OLD WEST GHOST TOWN

Founded by a soon-to-be dead man, burned down by a toddler, roamed by outlaws: the wild days of Bodie and the fine state of its buildings make this one of the most famous Old West ghost towns in the country.

This Scenic 395 landmark is a state historic park, with the history and atmosphere to make for a memorable trip. Thousands of visitors each year can't be wrong. About a hundred buildings remain in arrested decay — frozen in time. That means golden hues of wood weathered by a century of wind, rain and sun, tin roofs running red with rust, and leaning walls propped up by old beams. Two miners found the first gold here back in 1859; one of them was named Body. Though thousands would profit from his findings, Body froze to death on a supply run that first winter. The extravagant town named after him eventually housed up to 10,000 people, back in the roaring 1870s and 1880s. Several hundred buildings housed gold miners looking to cash in on the great Standard Mining Company strike of 1877, plus the sixty-odd gambling, drinking and dance houses that sought to separate those same men from their hard-earned money.

A real Old West ghost town, Bodie State Park stands in arrested decay just south of Bridgeport.

Despite the high desert hardships, many stayed on, pulling in an estimated $32 million in gold and another $6 million in silver from the hills during Bodie's heyday. However, first a stock market crash and then a major fire destroyed Bodie.

To get to Bodie, pick up State Highway 270 from a point on Highway 395 about seven miles south of Bridgeport or 18 miles north of Lee Vining. Drive about 13 miles east to Bodie. The last three miles are on a graded dirt road suitable for most passenger vehicles.

For more info and hours call 760-647-6445 visit www.parks.ca.gov and search for the Bodie links.

WALKING WOMAN

Bodie, the Ghost Town

by Rosemary Rideout
rideout@garlic.com

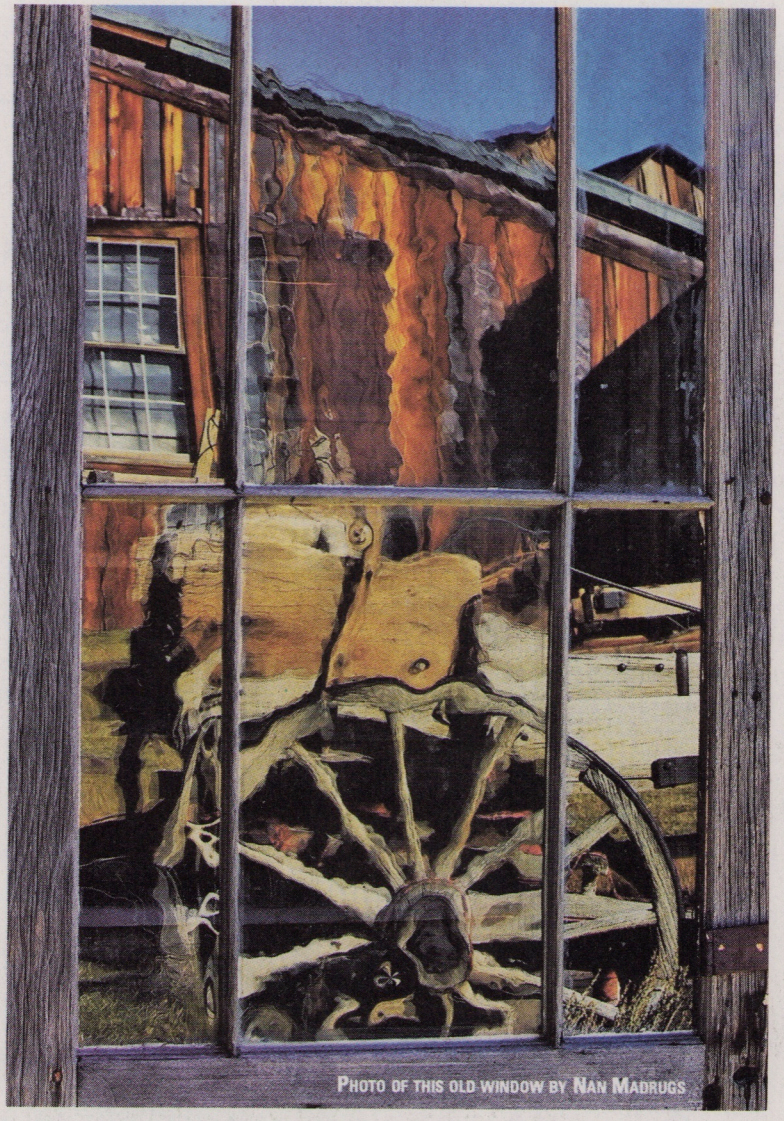


PHOTO OF THIS OLD WINDOW BY NAN MADRUGS

In 1988 I bought my first book on Western ghost towns. Even then the West was calling to me, though it would be years before timing and opportunity collided making for one of my biggest life decisions – to move to California from Nova Scotia. It took me another ten years to open up that book again and visit the Eastern Sierras with the goal of seeing Bodie, one of the West's most famous ghost towns. I've been back a handful of times since, each visit more intriguing and revealing than the last.

Bodie is a genuine California gold-mining ghost town. It is preserved in a state of "arrested decay" by the California State Parks as a State Historic Park. Visitors can walk down the very streets that once were walked by a population of nearly 10,000 people in the late 1800s. Gold was discovered by Waterman S. Body in the hills north of Mono Lake in California's Eastern Sierras in 1875. The mining concern was purchased by the Standard Company in 1877 and the rush began. People flocked there in anticipation of gold wealth in the hills above Bodie and the town briefly became a boomtown.

Today you can visit the Bodie State Historic Park year round, if you can get to it. In the winter the only access is by snowshoe, skis or snowmobile. Winter weather is often unpredictable and sub-zero temperatures and a biting wind are common. But the fall is a perfect time for a visit and that's when I went most recently, along with two other photographers, a first visit for each of them. No matter the season, the last couple miles into the park is on a dirt road, graded into a perfect washboard, perhaps designed to shake the gold out of your teeth.

Once arrived in Bodie, you can spend hours discovering a tiny bit of the town's history at your own leisure as you walk the streets and peek into the windows of the town's buildings, many of them still stocked with goods of the early 1900s. At the height of the gold rush, there were 800 buildings in Bodie, making it the second largest city in California after San Francisco. Now

a small fraction (about 5%) of those buildings remain. The landscape is strewn with thousands of rusted tin cans and tools and carts of yesteryear, implements of a bustling community of families, store-keepers, and miners. Signs placed here and there help you to identify the homes, businesses, shops and even provide little glimpses into the lives of some of the town's most interesting residents.

On this recent visit, I gravitated to the town's graveyard, set on a hill above the town. It is said that a person was killed every day in Bodie, such a rowdy and rugged place, fueled by as many as sixty-five saloons and numerous houses of ill-repute, gambling halls and opium dens. I can't help but wonder where most of these town-folk were buried as the graveyard is relatively small and peaceful, with headstones of men, women and children alike, all who passed during those boom years. It's a great place to make a photograph which shows the town spread out below, the most handsome building being the Methodist church built in 1882, the only protestant church built in Bodie.

Although the Bodie Mining District produced close to 100 million dollars in gold and silver, much of the money was squandered or sent out of Bodie to absent stakeholders. With the hard work, rough town and miserable weather, hot in the summer and almost unbearably cold in the winter, the average resident's life was pretty wretched.

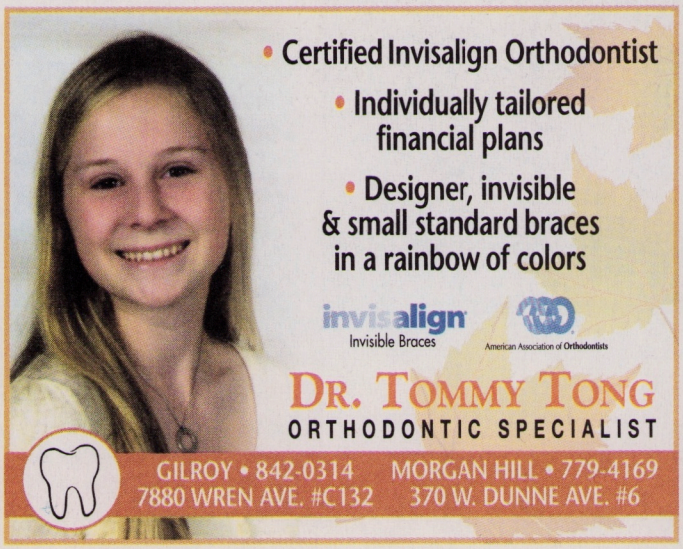
On this day, tourists spent a few hours walking the streets, looking into the windows and complaining about the heat and the wasps, which are particularly persistent and vicious in the parking area. When we called it quits for the day, we were rewarded by another serendipitous photo opportunity. On the way out of the Bodie hills we were delighted to stop alongside the road to watch a herd of sheep being driven by dogs to new fodder, their bleats and bells charming us.

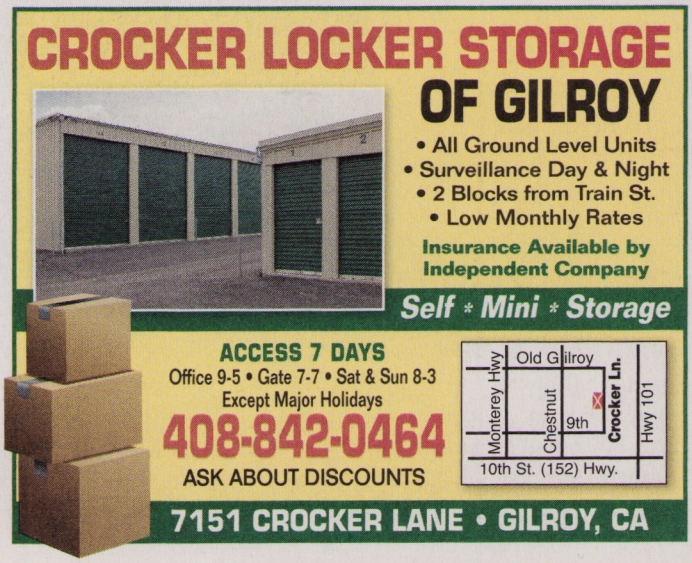
And what of Bodie's ghosts? Sometimes a glimpse into a Bodie window provides a shocking reflection of ourselves, wind-blown and maybe just a little stirring of something else, not quite seen. To be sure, there are stories of ghosts, but I will leave them for others as none presented themselves to me. At least not yet. The history alone is haunting enough for me to come back again and again.

To visit: The park is northeast of Yosemite, thirteen miles east of Highway 395 on Bodie Road (Hwy 270), seven miles south of Bridgeport.

From U.S. 395 seven miles south of Bridgeport, take State Route 270. Go east 10 miles to the end of the pavement and continue 3 miles on a dirt road to Bodie. The last 3 miles can at times be rough. Reduced speeds are necessary. Call the park if there are any questions about road conditions.

~ Rosemary Rideout was born in Nova Scotia, Canada. She moved to California in 1993. She is an avid photographer. She has been enchanted by the abundance and diversity that Mother Nature offers here. She can be reached at rideout@garlic.com.





BODIE OR BUST

The 156-year-old ghost town springs to vivid, raucous life during its 29th annual Friends of Bodie Day

A long, dusty, bumpy road cuts into pine-clad hills from U.S. 395 near Bridgeport, Calif. It winds 13 miles through changing vistas, opening into a vast landscape, and eventually giving onto a dirt road, where the old mining town of Bodie finally appears, buildings and tailings couched among the sagebrush foothills at the horizon.

In 1859, William S. Bodey discovered gold in the area. A handful of miners grew into a teeming population of 10,000 people by the 1880s. The town of Bodie teemed with miners' families, shop owners, outlaws, prostitutes and curious people from all over the world who found their way to this remote area of the Eastern Sierra overflowing with saloons, gambling halls, whorehouses and opium dens.

When the last residents left in the mid-1960s, the mines had already been silent for a couple of decades. Today, the ghost town stands in a state of relative stasis—plates on tables, clothes on hooks, life interrupted—as if residents will be back at any moment and time stood still.

Travel back in time and take a walk through history during the annual Friends of Bodie Day on Aug. 13. Every summer the ghost town comes alive for one day as visitors are transported into the 1870s when gold mining ruled. If you've never experienced this day, your view of the West and its history will be changed forever. Reading a history textbook has nothing on living history.

Horses and buggies, mules and wagons and hundreds of folks dressed in period costume fill the streets during Friends of Bodie Day. Ladies of the evening, lawmen, miners, stagecoach drivers, gunfighters and kids move through the town entertaining visitors and making them part of the action.

Historian and guide Terri Geissinger is part advocate and part-time traveler from Bodie's past. As business manager of the Bodie Foundation, she keeps Bodie in our consciousness with her regular posts on Facebook. She is an ebullient fan of this rare and special place—and her enthusiasm is infectious.

"We have four excellent bluegrass bands lined up to play era music throughout the day," she said about Friends of Bodie Day. "The Dynamite Mule Train will make its explosive delivery on Main Street at 11 a.m. You can watch firsthand as this magnificent

story continues →

Bodie Foundation is the official Cooperating Association that is in agreement with California State Parks to raise money for preservation, stabilization, and interpretation of Bodie. Help to save Bodie by joining its membership and receive a personal invite to the biggest night of the year. Visit www.BodieFoundation.org or Terri@BodieFoundation.org

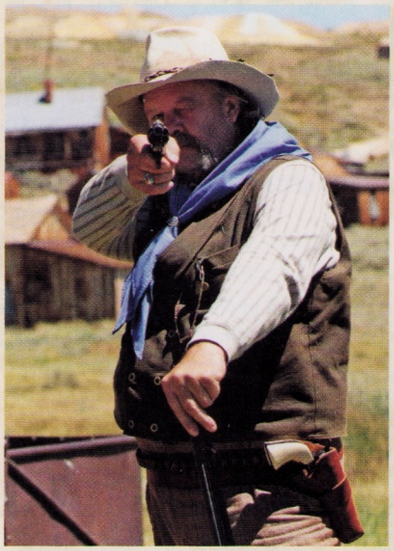
mule train is unloaded and transformed in a wagon hitch team. This demonstration is done in historic fashion and will impress the crowd. You don't want to miss these gentle giants in action."

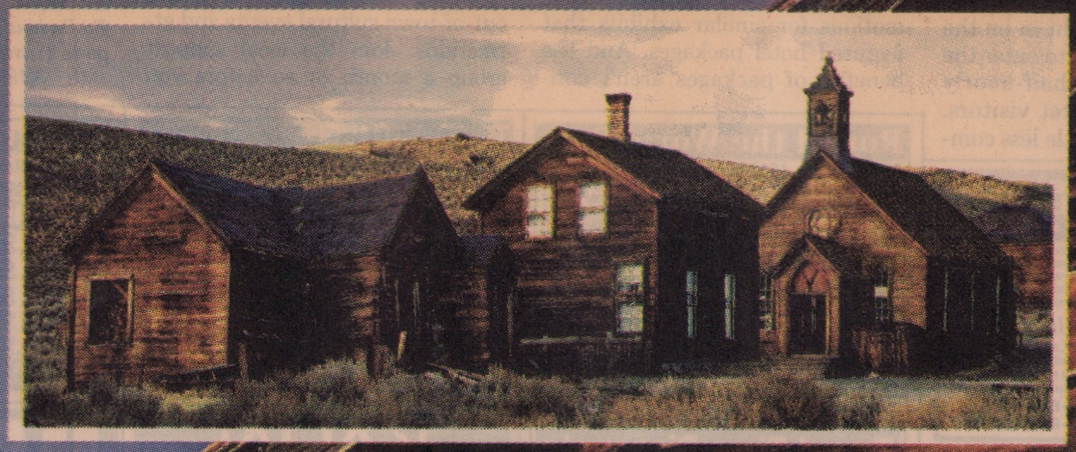
In addition, she said, "There will be vintage games for kids, including a watermelon eating contest with prizes. And speaking of food, Albert's Meat Market will be selling hot dogs and hamburgers and if we are lucky, ice cream too. Between lunch, music, and mule trains, you'll want to meet the characters of Bodie through living history presentations. The Methodist Church is open to the public on this day and it provides a perfect setting for you to sit back and listen to the Soul Stories of Bodie."

Members of the Bodie Foundation get the opportunity for a special Bodie experience beginning with a BBQ dinner served at the Red Barn. At 6 p.m., the park closes to the public and as the visitors leave, the members get ready for their Special Evening Tour. This year, the Member Tour will be a stroll through the quiet streets of Bodie and inside favorite buildings. "Time will slip away as you as meet the characters of Bodie who have left their memories behind," Geissinger said.

The Bodie Foundation raises money to "preserve and protect the best example of an Old West mining town in America." All proceeds from membership, retail sales, and tours go directly to critical projects within Bodie State Historic Park.

"Y'all come, grab your cowboy hat, put on your spurs, and mount up: Friends of Bodie Day is a rollicking, bawdy, fun-filled, action-packed, period costume kind of day."





6-23-1996

GOODBYE GOD, WE'RE GOING TO BODIE

BY SUSAN GUHM
SPECIAL TO THE EXAMINER

BODIE, Mono County — When the icy, high-desert wind known as the "Bodie Zephyr" whistles down the main street of town, unsettling noises escape from ramshackle old wooden buildings.

Perhaps they're coming from old wallpaper or shingles flapping in the breeze, perhaps from a loose window screen or a door swinging on its one last hinge.

At times a window in an empty building will glow, as if lit from within. Maybe it's the sunlight glinting off a window pane. Maybe. When the wind finally settles down and evening light draws long shadows across the land, the silence feels unnatural — disquieting, even.

In Bodie, an exquisitely preserved gold mining community east of the Sierra Nevada, the term "ghost town" takes on an eerie, literal meaning.

But there was a time, not all that long ago, when one could hear people calling out greetings to one another, the sounds of footfalls on squeaky boardwalks, horses clomping on unpaved streets, dogs barking, barroom glasses tinkling, gunfire crackling and the constant distant roar of giant machines crushing rock.

In 1881 the Rev. F.M. Warrington described Bodie as "a sea of sin, lashed by the tempests of lust and

[See BODIE, T-3]

Bodie has lost its openly sinful side

passion" — a description to which many residents did not object.

Between its frequent fistfights, almost daily shootings and burials, booming red-light district and its ratio of one saloon for every 100 men, Bodie took a perverse pride in its reputation as a godless hellhole.

Once a little girl, upon learning that her family was moving here, wrote in her diary, "Goodbye God. I'm going to Bodie." At least that's what one newspaper from a distant town reported. However, a Bodie paper gave its own version of her diary entry. The editor reported that what she had actually written was, "Good! By God, I'm going to Bodie!"

Like a great entertainer, Bodie can still draw a big crowd. Unfortunately — at least for some visitors — it has lost its openly sinful side and become a state historic park visited by people from all over the world.

Visitors leave gas stations, hotels, restaurants and grocery stores many miles back, park their cars and RVs or depart their tour buses and walk a short distance into town.

Photographers appear mesmerized by the abundance of subject matter — the fine grain of weathered wood, rusted mining machinery, old wagons, the mines on Bodie Bluff overlooking town, the puffy clouds in a deep blue sky, grass growing over something thrown away long ago.

Unlike other ghost towns in America, the only commerce here is in the park's museum and visitor center, housed in the Miner's Union Hall built in 1878.

The almost complete absence of anything modern maintains the town just as it was the day its last resident left town. Through the efforts of park employees and volunteers, many of the buildings have been re-roofed or their walls stabilized to maintain them in a state of "arrested decay."

Bodie is nestled in a grassy bowl, surrounded by hills in the open high-desert uplands of eastern California. The residents who once lived and worked here are long departed, but they left behind stories indelibly written in history.

This is the hometown of the legendary "Badman from Bodie." The Badman was probably not any one single man, but was most likely an amalgamation of all that was considered evil about the town. He was a combination outlaw and marauder, a big brute who went unchallenged by those who quivered in his presence, and no doubt a man who thought nothing of growling at little children. At least that was what the outside world enjoyed thinking about the Badman from Bodie. It is an image that still draws people today.

Although the town was founded in 1859, it was not until 1875 that a rich vein, struck in the Bunker Hill mine, attracted big money from San Francisco and mine development took off. By 1880 the population reached a little over 6,000 and Bodie mines produced gold bullion valued at $3 million (roughly equivalent to $60 million in today's dollars).

Before one even begins to consider the ability of Bodie people to find trouble, one only has to look to nature for the first requirement of survival in this town. Sam Clemens, who lived in nearby Aurora before he became Mark Twain, said this country had only two seasons: "the breaking up of one winter and the beginning of the next."

The weak of mind or body didn't last long. Winter temperatures of 20 degrees below zero were common then — still are — and most newcomers were forced to adapt to the town's unique methods of survival. A local newspaper editor listed one such method: "A winter's supply of grub; a few books, including a pack of cards; and half a barrel of whiskey will carry a person through until spring."

Thin cabin walls, covered inside with wallpaper, provided little comfort when the notorious Bodie Zephyr blew into town.

In the winter of 1884 an almost continuous line of snowstorms barrelled down off the Sierra Nevada. Over five feet of snow accumulated in the streets. Snowbanks reached the eaves. Awnings and buildings collapsed. Surviving such conditions — blizzards, collapsing buildings, pilfered woodpiles, pneumonia — made the populace all the more crazy for spring and summer and entertainment.

At any time of year, violence was a fact of life in Bodie — and a legend that spread through the West. A journal published in a distant town stated, "A Bodie man never has two disputes with the same man. This is explained by the fact that he kills him at the first quarrel." In sarcastic reply the editor of the Bodie Standard wrote that the writer of this article failed "to mention that the Bodie man always eats his victim, after killing him."

Those not felled by violence felt blessed if they escaped the scourge of disease and the treatment of doctors. Some felt the doctoring profession had barely advanced beyond bloodletting. One newspaper writer, reporting of a hunting outing that involved a local doctor, noted that it was the only time of year when the doctor didn't kill anything.

At its peak 65 saloons slaked the town's considerable thirst. Three breweries produced a tonic called "Bodie Lightning Whiskey" that the Bodie Free Press described as made from "old boots, scraps of iron, snow-slides and climate," adding that "it only takes a couple of 'snorts' to craze a man of ordinary brainpower." Of course, the town's elevation of 8,400 feet undoubtedly helped add firepower to the Bodie booze.

Frequently the snowbanks of winter and the mud puddles of summer were briefly occupied by the sprawled, inebriated bodies of both sexes. In the case of women, these were usually the employees of the bordellos along Bonanza Alley. At the northern edge of town and lining both sides of Bonanza Alley were saloons, dance halls and the girls' tiny cabins. In this area of town the combination of alcohol, opium, guns and touchy egos made for explosive times.

As time went on, Bodie's population of wives and families increased. In 1878 one woman began teaching 14 pupils in her home, but the number of students soon outgrew her accommodations. In 1879 a school was built, but was shortly burned down by a young tough who didn't want to attend. Classes were then moved two blocks up the street to the former Bon Ton Lodging House.

Although Bodie was many miles from a major city, the wonders of the age could still be hauled into town. One such wonder was the first shower stall in town, marvelously equipped with an overhead sprinkler. So odd was this object that it was put on public display. A newspaper stated the shower "consists of a closet and looks like a 'sweat-box' formerly used as a means of torture."

Residents also entertained themselves with horse races (on the race track south of town); fights between dogs, badgers or bears; Fourth of July parades down Main Street; wrestling matches and foot races. One race held on July 4, 1882, had only two participants — Harvey Boone and Ben Eggleston. The crowds roared their approval when both men stepped up to the starting line wearing long underwear — Boone in red, Eggleston in white. Boone won the 75-yard dash by a yard.

Harvey Boone, a direct descendant of Daniel Boone, was the owner of the Boone Store and Warehouse, one of the gems of today's Bodie State Historic Park. The store stands at the corner of Main and Green streets as if Boone had just locked the door and walked away. Shelves are still full of merchandise, items are still on display in the front windows.

It looks as if a little dusting of the shelves and sweeping of the floor would have the store back in business in just a few hours.

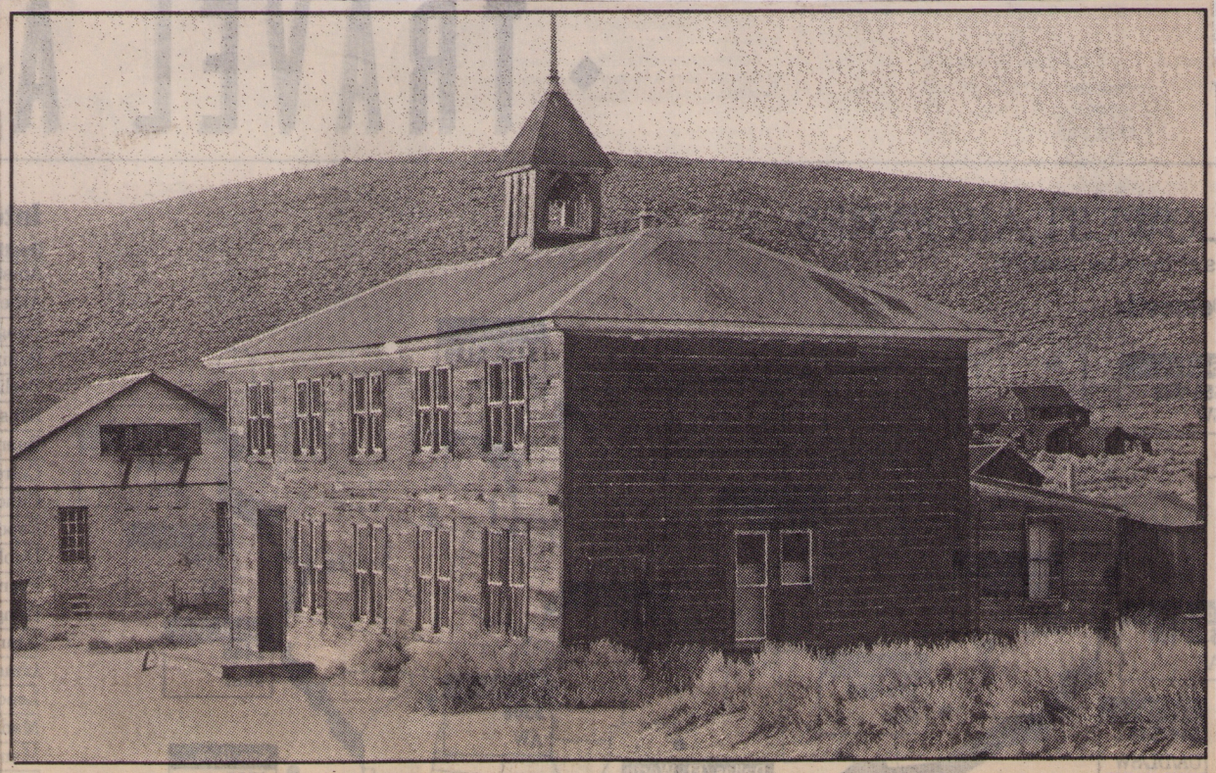
Over 70 buildings still stand in Bodie, including the Methodist church with pews and pulpit intact, the Miner's Union Hall, the Bodie School complete with old-fashioned school desks and genuine slate blackboards, the vault of the Bodie Bank — which, a little miraculously, nobody ever tried to rob — and one of the mortuaries, complete with several coffins on display in the front window.

In 1882 gold production began a slow plunge, real estate values plummeted, and houses, businesses and furnishings were slowly abandoned as people left town. In a few short years, the Standard became the only gold mine in operation. It continued producing gold bullion well into this century.

Then in 1932 came the final blow — a fire swept through Bodie and destroyed many neighborhoods. After that, only a few residents remained into the 1950s, protecting what was left.

Then in 1962 Bodie became a State Historic Park and efforts to preserve the town began.

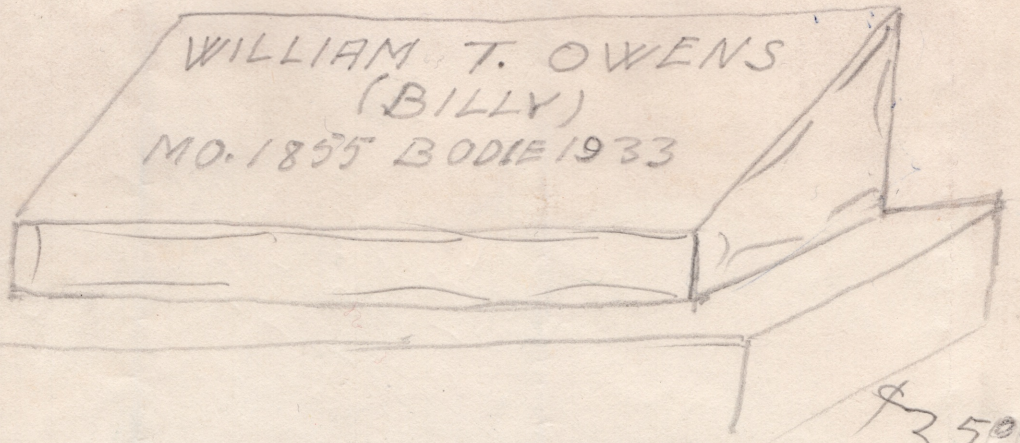
Bodie Lightning beer, gamblers, gunslingers, prostitutes and the Badman are gone, but their stories and some of their buildings have survived. The good Reverend Warrington would be pleased to see that his "sea of sin" is now only lashed by the tempest known as the Bodie Zephyr.



SUSAN GUHM

This schoolhouse *in the Bodie replaced the one burnt down by a "young tough" who didn't want to attend.*

Oct 5, 1962



$35.00

tax 1.40

36.40

Robert Wood Larson Sr. purchased marker in Salinas, California and installed it at Bodie, California.

Garden of Memories Memorial Park

Salinas, California

Mausoleum * Cemetery * Crematorium * Columbarium

768 Abbott Street - HArrison 4-3750 - HArrison 4-3505

10/5/62

To: R. W. Larson Sr.
1399 Abbott St
Salinas

FOR THE ACCOUNT OF

CEMETERY PERMIT #____ LOT ____ BLOCK ____ SECTION ____

MAUSOLEUM PERMIT #____ CRYPT ____ TIER ____ SECTION ____

CREMATORY PERMIT #____ NICHE ____ SECTION ____ COL. ____

REC'D. BY Bill Thomas

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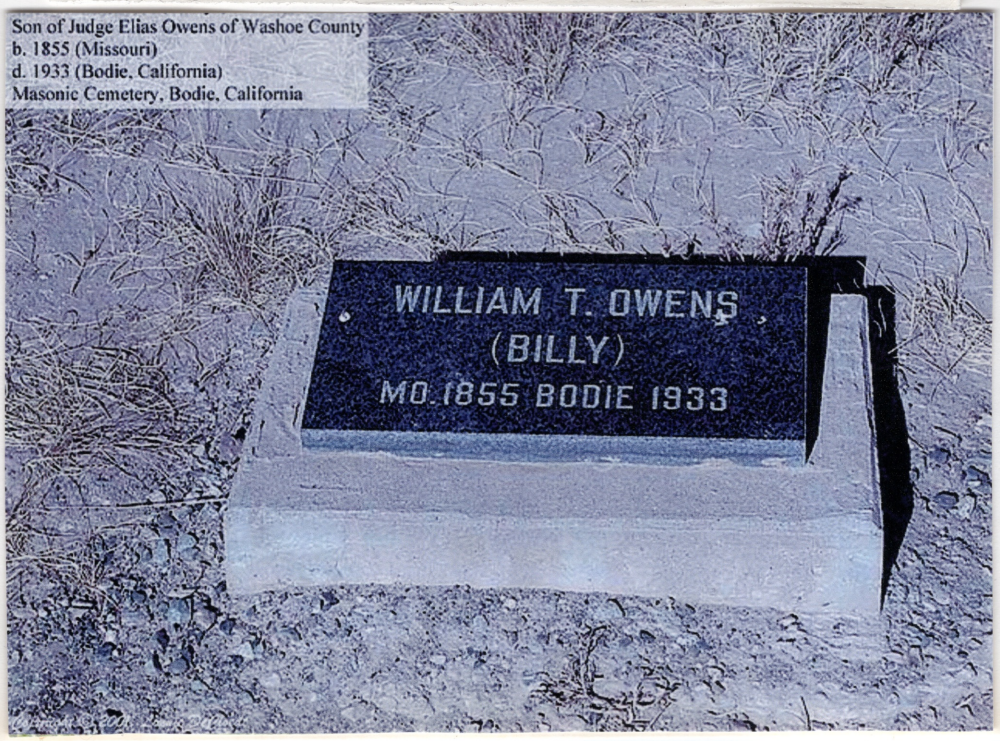
CREMATION FEE	
CONCRETE SECTIONAL LINER	
URN VAULT	
MARKER	35.00
URN	
ENGRAVING	
ANNUAL CEMETERY CARE	
ENDOWMENT CARE	
MARKER SETTING	
CONTRACT PAYMENT	
FRAME SERVICE	
VASE	
CARRYING CHARGE	
REMARKS: SALES TAX	1.40
TOTAL	36.40

William T. Owens

Son of Judge Elias Owens of Washoe County
b. 1855 (Missouri)
d. 1933 (Bodie, California)
Masonic Cemetery, Bodie, California



VIC LARSON 1932

GRANDMA JOHNSON'S LODGING HOUSE

BODIE, CALIFORNIA

DEDICATION OF THE GHOST TOWN OF BODIE

P R O G R A M

Invocation	Rev. Orville F. Blackburn Church of Christ, Bridgeport
Presentation of the Colors	United States Marine Corps Color Guard Mountain Warfare Training Center, Bridgeport
Pledge of Allegiance	Judge Walter R. Evans, Master of Ceremonies Mono County Superior Court
Welcome	Mr. Walter B. Cain, Chairman Mono County Board of Supervisors

Recognition of "Bodieites"
Introduction of Senior Citizens
Recognition of "The Ella M. Cain Museum", Union Miners Hall

Acceptance of the J. S. Cain Memorial Plaque	Mrs. Ella M. Cain
Band Selection	Marine Band, First Marine Division, F.M.F. Camp Pendelton
Introductions	
Presentation of National Historic Landmark Plaque	Dr. John A. Hussey, Regional Chief Division of History and Archeology National Park Service, U.S. Dept. of Interior
Acceptance of the National Plaque	Hon. Harold T. (Bizz) Johnson, M. C. Second District, California
Presentation of State Historical Landmark Plaque	Hon. Charles A. DeTurk, Director Department of Parks and Recreation State of California
Acceptance of the State Plaque	Hon. Edward F. Dolder, Chief Division of Beaches and Parks State of California
Address	Hon. William (Bill) Symons Calif. State Senate, 28th District
Band Selection	U.S.M.C. Band
Brief Resume of the History of Aurora, Nevada	Judge Walter R. Evans

Arrival of Stage Coach
Greetings from Governors Edmund G. Brown of California
and Grant Sawyer of Nevada
Introductions of Governor's Representatives
State Senator John C. "Bad Man From Bodie" Begovich of California
State Senator Bruck "Nevada Kid" Parks of Nevada

Officiating at the Duel
Hon. Paul Lunardi, Calif. State Senator and Jack McCloskey

Music "High Noon"	U.S.M.C. Band
Conclusion	Col. Frank R. Wilkerson, U.S.M.C., Commanding Officer Mountain Warfare Training Center, Pickle Meadows, Bridgeport
Benediction	Father Thomas V. Savage Mono County Catholic Churches Lee Vining

HONORED GUESTS

Mr. Charles A. DeTurk, Director, Department of Parks and Recreation

Mr. Edward F. Dolder, Chief, Division of Beaches and Parks

Mr. Richard F. McCarthy, Chairman, California Historical Landmarks Advisory Committee

Mr. William E. Warne, Department of Water Resources, State of California

Mr. John C. Preston, Supt. of Yosemite National Park, U. S. Department of Interior

Miss Irene Simpson, Past President, Conference of California Historical Societies

Mr. Frank B. Durkee, Former Director of the State Department of Public Works

Mr. Charles W. Chesterman, Senior Geologist, Division of Mines & Geology, San Francisco

Mr. Clifton H. Gray, Associate Geologist, Division of Mines & Geology, Los Angeles

Mr. Orvel B. Johnson, President, National Historic Restoration Association

Dr. Albert Shumate, California Historical Society, San Francisco

Mr. and Mrs. B. K. Dunshee

Mr. E. Phillip Pister, Department of Fish and Game, State of California

Mr. Carl McElvey, State Architect

Mr. and Mrs. Alex Krater, Death Valley '49ers

Mr. Archie Stevenot, "Mr. Mother Lode", Sonora

Mr. Thomas H. Renner, Grand Warden, Grand Lodge of Calif., Independent Order of Odd Fellows

Mr. Sid Smith, Amador County Delegation, and the Kit Carson Mountain Men

Mr. and Mrs. Jack Pepper, Editors of Desert Magazine

Mr. D. E. Knowlton, Deputy State Forester

Mr. Fred M. Dunow, Deputy State Forester

Mr. John N. Clark, Forestry Supt., Inyo-Mono Conservation Camp, Bishop

Mr. Donald I. Segerstrom

Mr. Jack McCloskey, Executor, Mono County, California, A Debt to Mineral County, Nevada

State of California
The Resources Agency
Department of Parks and Recreation
Division of Beaches and Parks
BODIE STATE HISTORIC PARK

BODIE

CALIFORNIA'S FAVORITE GHOST TOWN

by George Williams, III

Photos by Jim Stroup

Bodie is one of America's last ghost towns still alive. It hasn't burned to the ground. It hasn't been hauled away by enthusiasts. And it hasn't been dolled up with painted signs, casinos, or gas stations.

Bodie stands in all its worn glory, looking pretty much the way it did when the gold mines shut down. The old ghost town is an aging reminder of a great American era that will never come again.

In the past few years, Bodie has become increasingly popular as a sightseer's delight. Much of this is due to the new paved road; turn off is seven miles south of Bridgeport on Highway 395. The road into Bodie is 13 miles. Ten miles are paved. The last three are bumpy, but trailers and RVs get in just fine. There are no gas stations or stores in Bodie, so bring everything you'll need. And in winter months, check highway conditions before embarking, the road may be closed.

Bodie has a cult following of people who discovered the ghost town on their own. These people come back from time to time — sometimes every year. For Bodie is a place that stirs the emotions and stimulates fantasies of the Old West. Each person gets to feel as if Bodie belongs to them alone. In a way it does. As a California State Park and a National Historic Site, they *do* own part of it.

Many first-time visitors to the eastern Sierra are not aware that Bodie was the culminating bonanza in a series of gold strikes which took place after the 1849 gold rush. During the latter 1850s, when many of the western slope placers were worked out, men crossed

continued on next page . . .

(Above) Post office and Odd Fellows Lodge
(Opposite page, top) J.S. Cain's house
(Opposite page, bottom) Interior of Boone store and warehouse

PEARLINE
TEA GARDEN
BAYRUM
GROUND
COFFEE
CORINA

over to the eastern Sierra in search of new strikes. The Dogtown placer discovery in 1857, seven miles south of Bridgeport, caused the first rush to this area. Two years later gold was found in Rattlesnake Gulch north of Mono Lake, and one mile east of Conway Summit. The site was named Monoville, and by the spring of 1860 the area was flooded with prospectors. Monoville became the first major settlement east of the Sierra and south of Lake Tahoe. The camp had 40 houses, several hotels and numerous saloons. Some buildings still remain.

It was to Monoville that Bill Bodey, Bodie's namesake (spelling of the town was altered because of a printer's error) wandered in early 1859. In the fall of that year, Bodey and three others, Pat Garraty, Terrence Brodigan and Bill Boyle, made a prospecting trip from Monoville into the nearby hills, now called the Bodie Hills. At a place later named Taylor Gulch, east of Bodie and over Silver Hill, the four men found gold in a quartz outcropping. The men were excited but unprepared for the approaching Sierra winter. They decided to leave the site and promised each other to keep their discovery secret until spring when they would return.

But Bill Bodey broke his promise. He soon returned to the area with 'Black' Taylor, a short dark man, half Cherokee. Bodey and Taylor built a crude cabin and began working their claims.

It was on a return supply trip from Monoville that a surprise blizzard caught Bodey and Taylor in Cottonwood Canyon, north of Mono Lake. Both men struggled through the cold and snow, but Bodey weakened and Taylor had to carry him until he was exhausted. They decided that Taylor should return to the cabin — now only a mile and a half away — refresh himself and return for Bodey. Taylor left Bodey wrapped in a blanket.

When Taylor returned to the area where he had left Bodey, the blizzard had worsened and he was unable to find him. In the spring, Taylor found Bodey's remains, stripped by hungry coyotes.

Taylor buried Bodey in a grave three and a half feet deep in the blanket in which he had left him. In 1879, Bodey was exhumed and buried in the Bodie Cemetery. 'Black' Taylor was later savagely murdered by Indians near Benton.

A handful of miners continued working the Bodie diggings through the 1860s and 70s. But the rich strikes at Virginia City in 1859 and nearby Aurora and Benton in 1860 drew interest away from Bodie.

In 1876 a freak cave-in at the Bunker Hill mine — later called the Standard — revealed a rich gold deposit. Investors poured money in. Then in 1878 there was an even richer strike in the Bodie mine. Within six weeks the Bodie mine shipped one million dollars in gold bullion!

Bodie boomed. By the end of 1878 the tiny camp had mushroomed into a town of 600 to 800 buildings. Stages were unable to carry enough gold-crazed men and women into Bodie, the new boom town.

At the peak of Bodie's boom in 1880, nearly 10,000 people and hundreds of buildings filled the narrow mountain valley. With the gold excitement came the worst characters, Bodie bad men they were called. Bodie soon earned the reputation as the most wicked and violent mining camp in the West. Murders, shootings and knifings were rampant in the saloons. Dance halls and saloons roared day and night, gambling was non-stop, the pounding of the stamp mills were relentless, and the row of red lights behind Main Street burned until dawn.

It was in the north end of Bodie, in the Main Street saloons, in Chinatown dance halls on King Street, and in the houses of prostitution on Bonanza Street where most of the violence took place. Drifting bad men, out of work, filled with whiskey and wine, exploded on little provocation. Fights over dance hall girls and prostitutes were common. Often prostitutes were victims of bloody beatings. Kate Wise was beaten by Jack Perry. Sailor Jack, a notorious prostitute, was beaten with a lunch bucket by Pat Shea. Mrs. Draper was beaten to death by her husband with a black snake whip. Being a prostitute in a wild mining town like Bodie was not as glamorous as the Hollywood movies portray.

continued on next page . . .

The lives of the Bodie prostitutes were sad. Many turned to alcohol or smoked opium in the Chinatown joss houses to ease the loneliness of their lives. In the end, many chose suicide as the ultimate escape.

Eleanor Dumont — Madame Moustache — was one. She was a gambler. In her youth, her beauty and quiet confidence stunned miners. She first appeared in Nevada City in 1855. For the next 24 years she followed the latest mining excitement and when her luck went bad she turned to prostitution to recoup her gambling losses. She arrived in Bodie in September, 1879. But luck did not come with her. After losing a borrowed stake of $300, Dumont quietly walked out of town. Two miles south of Bodie she swallowed poison. Her body was discovered later and buried in the Bodie outcast cemetery, outside the cemetery fence.

French Joe is another sad story. She was arrested in 1879 for kicking the windows out of a dance hall. Like Dumont, French Joe left Bodie on foot. Her body was later discovered four miles from town near Rough Creek.

Rosa May was one of Bodie's most beautiful and successful prostitutes. She arrived in Bodie in 1892 after many years in Virginia City and Carson City. She was in love with Ernest Marks, a Bodie saloon keeper, who had also come down from Gold Hill near Virginia City. Rosa May and Marks' tempestuous relationship had been on and off again for twenty years.

Rosa May purchased a small white house on Bonanza Street where she ran a noted prostitution and gambling business. Stories of Rosa May's kindness abound. She often gave money and food to her destitute neighbors. She gave dimes to children whenever she came uptown.

In the severe winter of 1911-12, Rosa May died while nursing miners during a pneumonia epidemic. Despite her acts of kindness and her efforts to save the lives of the Bodie miners, she was denied burial in the Bodie Cemetery. Her friends were forced to bury her in the outcast cemetery. Ernest Marks, her lover of 34 years, had a picket fence placed around her grave which was

continued on page 19

later destroyed by vandals. The author located Rosa May's lost grave site and replaced the picket fence.

Bodie's days in the sun were too few, from 1879-82. Manipulation of Bodie mining stocks by San Francisco stockbrokers eventually caused investors to gamble their money elsewhere. With less cash, Bodie's days were numbered. Still, the Standard mine and mill continued to operate. The introduction of the cyanide gold extraction process in the 1890s helped keep Bodie alive until World War I. Finally, the Standard mine and mill shut down.

Without means of earning a living, miners were forced to move on, most with regrets. Bodie may have been isolated, entertainments few and winters hard, but the community was close and friendly. Many families had lived there since the boom. They had learned to help and depend on each other. When the bottom fell out, they were forced to leave the people and the home town they loved. Many left Bodie with tears. A handful of old timers held out through the 1940s, but they too died or moved away.

In 1932, a young boy playing with matches behind the Sawdust Corner Saloon started a fire which quickly spread to adjacent buildings. Hoses were hooked up to hydrants but no water spurted out. The water lines were clogged with mud and the hoses were useless. In a matter of hours, the fire destroyed a large portion of the town, several hotels, the bank, and most of the saloons where Bodie's legends were made.

Still, much of the camp still stands — the Standard mill, saloons, the general store, the fire house, jail, church, school house, the miners' cottages, the cemetery and the Bodie Museum — plenty to give visitors a good idea what the Old West was really like. □

George Williams, III is the author of ROSA MAY: THE SEARCH FOR A MINING CAMP LEGEND, THE GUIDE TO BODIE, and MURDERS OF CONVICT LAKE, available throughout the Sierra. Tree By the River Publishing, Box 413, Riverside, CA 92502.

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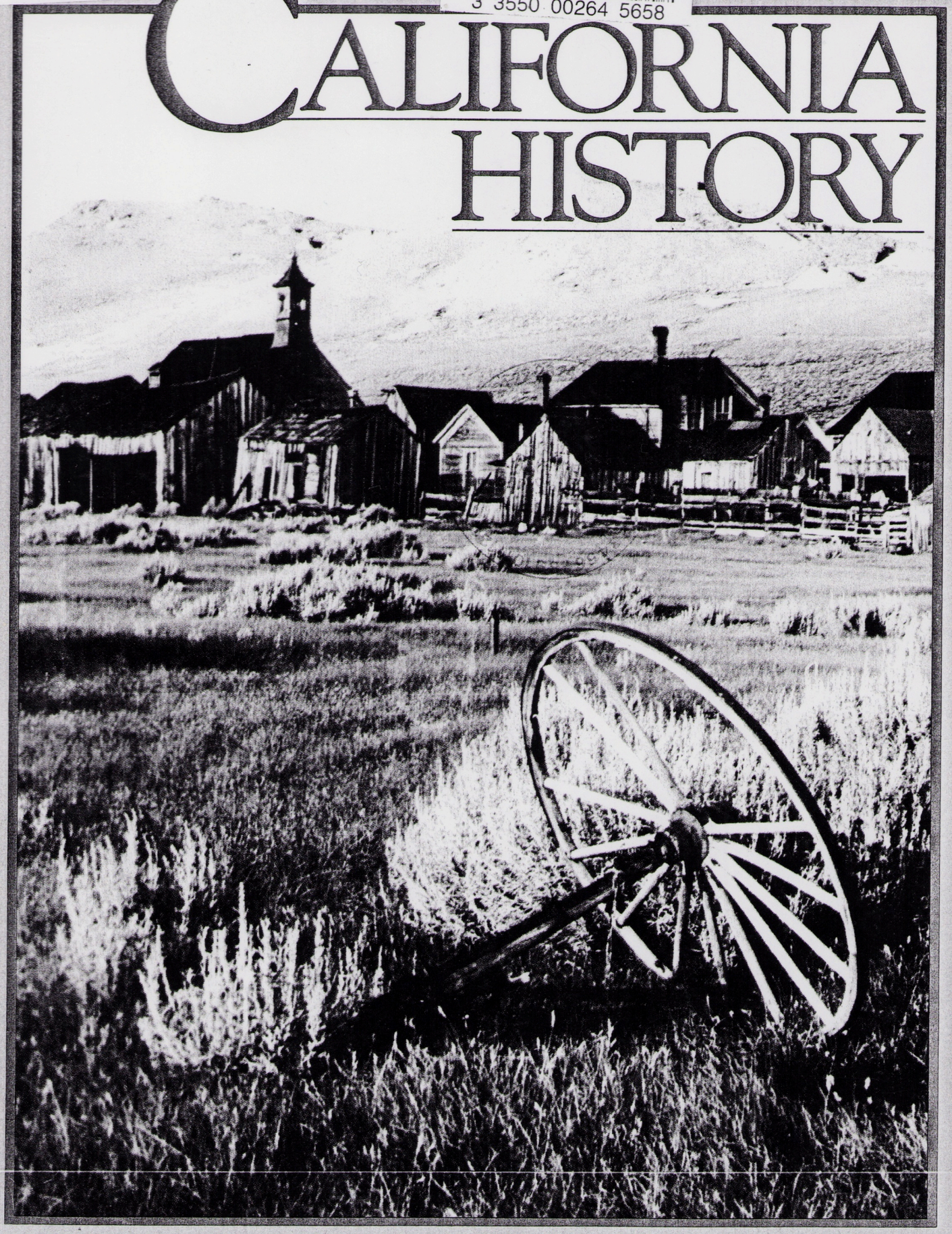
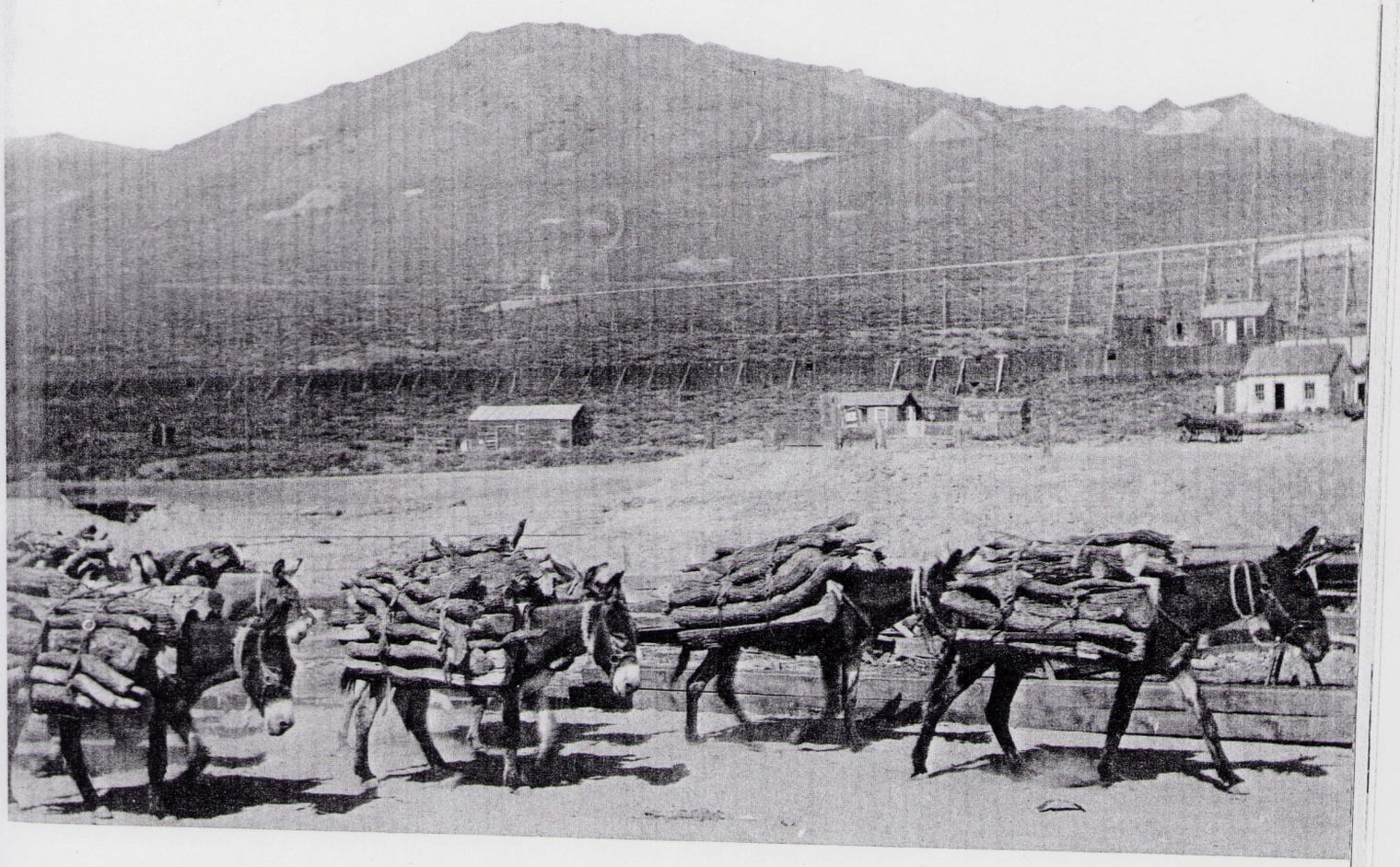
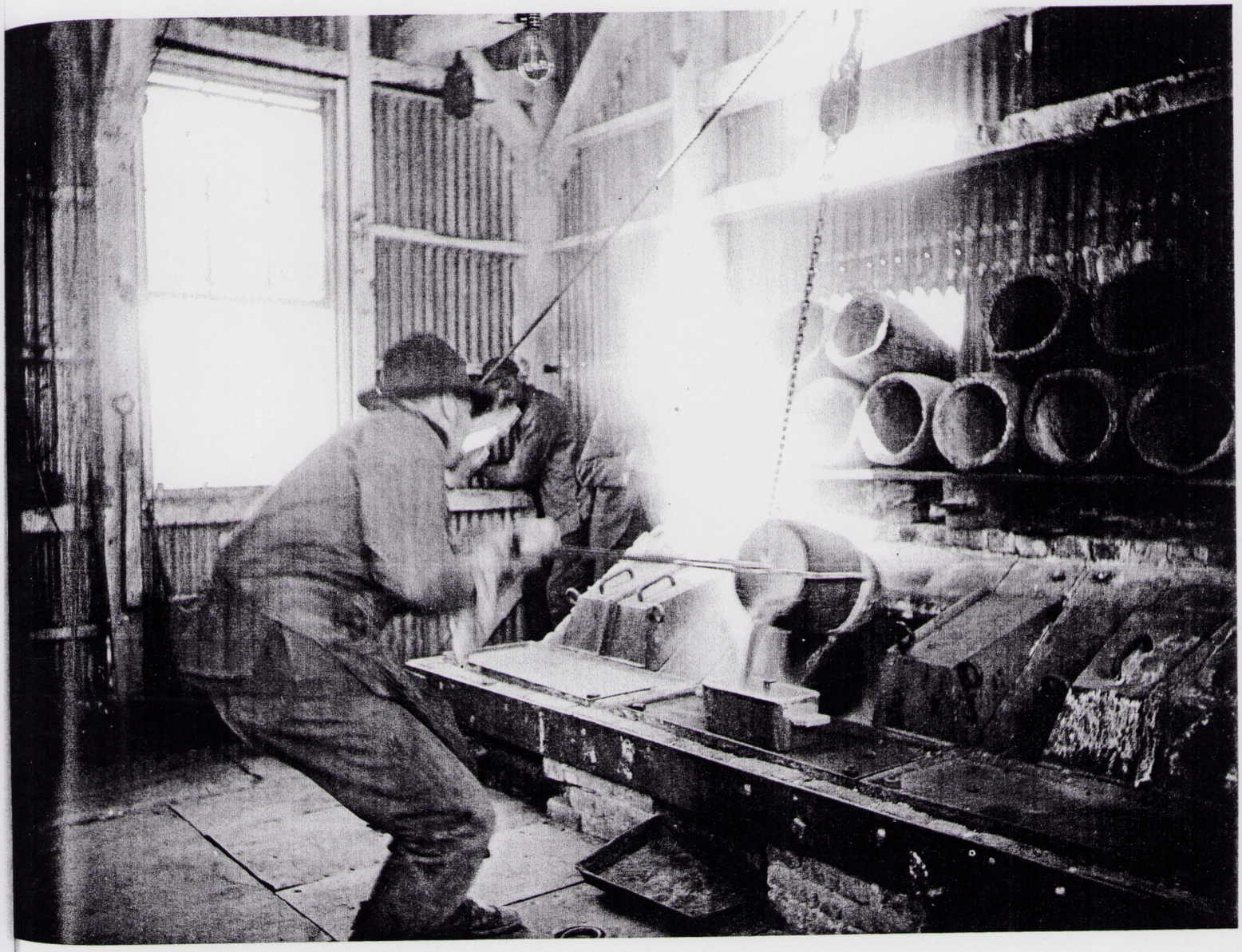




(Overleaf) Hauling supplies down the main street of Bodie. Date is not known.

Packing wood into Bodie, its only source of fuel. Note the mining claims being worked on the hill and the small and flimsy houses dotting the background. (All of the Bodie photographs included in this article are courtesy of Seaver Center for Western History Research, Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County.)

Hauling ore from one of the shaft mines which were scattered in and around the gold-rush town.



Working the gold smelter at Bodie.

Bodie

9-29-1988 *Bodie is full of history* **Photo by Bill Husa**

Bodie is where the ghosts live!

One of the most famous ghost towns in the entire west is Bodie, the historic mining town which is only a few miles east of U.S. 395 between Lee Vining and Bridgeport.

If you're traveling north from Lee Vining, turn right on the Pole Line Road (the highway to Hawthorne) just north of Mono Lake and follow the paved road for several miles until you see the plainly marked turnoff to Bodie. It is 18 miles from U.S. 395 to Bodie by this route. If you're traveling south from Bridgeport you may turn east on the Bodie road which meets the highway just south of Willow Springs. Distance from this junction to the colorful old ghost town is 13 miles.

According to Ella M. Cain in "The Story of Bodie" the wild and woolly mining boom town laid claim to four unique features: first, the wildest street of any mining camp; second, the wickedest men; third, the worst climate out of doors; and fourth, the best water on earth.

The Bodie Bar -- You can feel the history. **Photo by Bill Husa**

Actually "Bodie" should be called "Bodey" because the gold in the area was first discovered by William S. Bodey, a Dutchman from Poughkeepsie, N.Y. It is said that the man who painted the first sign on a livery stable in that community, misspelled the name and that spelling still stands to this day.

Twenty years after the first discovery of gold the town of Bodie gained the reputation of being the most lawless, the wildest, the toughest mining camp the far west has ever known. It produced more than 120 million dollars in gold and the slogan "The Bad Man from Bodie" was heard around the world.

The first real stampede to Bodie began in 1878 when very rich veins of gold were reported leading to a population of between 12,000 and 15,000 persons. By 1890, only 10 years later, the population was down to 2,000 and by the turn of the century only 1,500 remained.

Tales from a former Bodie Ranger give the "ghost town" new meaning

Photo by Marcia Didtler

This photo of Green Street in Bodie shows (from left) the Methodist Church, the Tom Miller House, and the J.S. Cain House, which is now the Park Office and Ranger's residence

By Marcia Didtler

My job this past summer as Park Ranger Aid at Bodie State Park has been a very interesting educational experience as well as an exclusive adventure that comes only to the select few that are numbered on the park staff.

I was quite excited to visit Bodie that bright warm June day for my interview. The interview went well and I was quite sure that I would be chosen as one of the Park Ranger Aids. One of the things that made my blood rush was the idea of living in Bodie. Rangers and Aids are housed in the old houses that still stand. The thought of living in a 'Ghost Town' such as Bodie cannot but catch the imagination.

The day finally came when the telephone rang and one of the Rangers informed me that I was to start full time at Bodie on July first. All through the excitement of getting ready for the move from Crowley Lake to Bodie, an echo of the past penned by a young girl making the same move kept whispering through my thoughts: "Good bye God, I'm going to Bodie."

I was assigned to the Gregory House on the corner of Green and Wood Streets. The Gregory House is a comfortable house with one bedroom, large living room with wood burning stove, and kitchen. There is also a large store room and the front porch has been modified into a darkroom. The Gregory house was built by Nathan Gregory who operated a cattle ranch between Bodie and Aurora before 1900. His son, Spence, one of the last residents of Bodie, lived here for years as a retired mining engineer.

My stay in the Gregory House was pleasant and the work was light but interesting. Learning about Bodie was an almost consuming passion. One thing that had been bothering me that I didn't bring into focus until late August was the absence of ghost stories; surely in a town as violent as Bodie there must exist stories of persons that have not yet left this sphere and still lurk in the weathered buildings of Bodie. I began to ask the Rangers and Aids direct questions concerning any such stories. I was not surprised to find that there were. These stories are not usually talked about by the Rangers to non-acquaintances but my Bodie summer had placed me within the inner circle.

The following stories are recounted by the Rangers as occuring to Rangers or Aids since Bodie was made a State Park. I have been, so far, unable to find stories that predate the Park period. The stories are arranged according to the house where they occurred.

GREGORY HOUSE: In a previous year, two Park Aids were living in the Gregory House. A friend of one of the Aids drove from Colorado for a visit and a chance for an overnight stay in Bodie. He arrived early in the morning and was dead tired after a 36-hour drive. The three had breakfast together than laid a mattress on the floor for the friend to get some sleep while the Aids went to work. Just before noon, the friend came wide awake from a sound sleep and sitting bolt upright, felt that someone was in the room with him. He looked around the room and saw an older woman sitting in the rocking chair working on an afghan. Not quite

Continued on page 3

Tales from a former Bodie Ranger give the "ghost town" new meaning

Cover story

Continued from page 2

believing his eyes, he rubbed them with his hands and looked again: the woman was gone but the rocker went back and forth twice before it stopped.

MENDOCINI HOUSE: At the time of this story, three Park Aids lived in the Mendocini House. One night, two of the Park Aids sat bolt upright in their beds at the same time, frozen as footsteps sounded through the house. One Aid inquired of the other: "Is that you?" "No" came the reply, "I thought it was you!" They both came to the conclusion that the third Aid was playing a trick. They got dressed and went to confront the third Aid, but no one else was in the house. They discovered the front door wide open, something which was unexplainable as the one Aid had locked the door before retiring. Needless to say, neither Aid got much sleep as they talked the rest of the night away in mutual comfort.

Their surprise came upon re-entering the Mendocini House: There was no lasagne smell, but smells that everyday living makes...the smell of old things that have been closed up for a long time.

Another time, the Aids from Mendocini House went to the Seiler House for pot luck. They spent quite a bit of time making a large lasagne; the entire house smelt of good Italian food. The dinner at Seiler house was a great success and the Aids returned feeling full and pleased. Their surprise came upon re-entering the Mendocini House: there was no lasagne smell, but smells that everyday living makes; just a musty smell - the smell of old things that have been closed up for a long time.

The next day, while combing her hair, one of the Aids observed through her mirror, the handle of a portable sewing machine move up through a 180 degree arc and then snap down with a sharp sound which made her turn around. There was no one there and no further movement, except for the Aid who headed for work 15 minutes early.

In another year, a Park Aid was alone in the Mendocini House on a snowy day enjoying a good book when she heard children laughing outside her window. She thought that odd, as during the periods of snow, the park does not have many visitors. Thinking to catch the children at play and inquiring as to who they were and where their parents were, she opened the window and looked out. There was no one there, nor were there footprints in the fresh snow, nor any sign of children playing. The laughing came several more times that day, and the Aid had great difficulty staying with her book.

SEILER HOUSE: While alone in the house and getting ready for work one morning, a Park Aid was putting on her shoes when all the doors in the house slammed shut and all the window shades rolled up. The Aid went outside to finish putting on her shoes.

Another time, while returning from dinner at the Seiler House, a Park Aid turned at the door to talk to her room mate, whom she thought was holding open the screen door. She suddenly realized that her room mate was in front of her and she was talking to a woman in late 1800 attire who was holding open the screen door. She looked from the woman to her room mate and back again to see nothing but the slowly closing screen door.

D.V. CAIN HOUSE: The Head Park Ranger and his family live in this house year round. One evening when the entire family was home enjoying time between dinner and bedtime, the tune of a music box suddenly started from the upstairs rooms. The entire family looked at each other in surprise; all knew that the only way to get the music box to play was to pull out a small drawer at the bottom of the box. All family members were downstairs. The Head Ranger finally went up stairs to discover the cause. There was no one there but the drawer of the music box was pulled out and the box was playing merrily - to whomever.

J.S. CAIN HOUSE: The Ranger family living in the J.S. Cain House at the time of this incident included a 16-year-old daughter. The daughter was using the upstairs room. On this particular night, she turned out the light and went to bed. As soon as her head hit the pillow, the light came on. This happened several times when she finally cried out "Cut that out!" The light went out, but she refused to sleep in that room that night or ever again.

In another year, the Ranger family living in the J.S. Cain house invited friends for a visit. Included in the visiting family were three children. The children were all to sleep in the upstairs room. After being tucked in, the children were quiet. Shortly after the mother went downstairs, both parents heard conversation for fifteen minutes then all was quiet again. When the children came down for breakfast in the morning, all three asked their father: "who was the pretty Chinese lady that sat on the bed and talked to them?" The father and mother were astounded, but could not answer the qustion. The father did some research on J.S. Cain and found that the Cain's did have a Chinese maid, but that she was sent back to her family.

It has been said that ghosts are the spirits of those who have died a violent death and don't know they are dead or those who were not ready to leave this sphere. Can it be that some of these spirits still inhabit Bodie, a Bodie that has not changed since they died, a Bodie that we cannot see? Who can say? The Rangers that have experienced these 'happenings' are not wont to talk about the things they have seen and heard, but their experiences are real. They now know that the spirit world can reach out and touch our world.

Photo by Marcia Didtler

Bodie's rustic appearance lends itself well to stories of spiritual phenomena.

This Old Ruin

A Ghost Town Is Suspended in Time, Thanks to Handyman's Invisible Hand

8-25-2006 By George Anders the Wall Street Journal

ONLY A LUNATIC would hire Brad Sturdivant for home repairs. He fixes barely enough to keep a building standing. He leaves wind-battered boards and peeling paint. Many of his jobs take years.

But in Bodie, Calif., Mr. Sturdivant's delicate touch is revered. He is the park ranger who oversees one of America's largest ghost towns, and thanks to his tinkering, an eastern Sierra valley full of abandoned miners' cabins, hotels and churches from the 1880s looks as if its last inhabitants packed up only a few months ago.

Mr. Sturdivant and his work crews practice what is known as arrested decay. California officials created the term in despair in the 1960s, soon after they acquired what became Bodie State Historical Park. Budgets were so small for the dilapidated old gold-mining community that early preservationists couldn't do more than hastily shore up the frailest buildings.

Thousands of abandoned mining towns riddle the Western states. In most cases, only their names are enchanting: Bootstrap, Nev., Humptown, Idaho, and the like are now a few barely noticeable ruins, miles from any paved road. But in the handful of cases in which people have decided to save ghost towns, they have faced a crucial choice. Abandoned buildings can be preserved in partial decay—or reoccupied and restored to something like their old, gaudy heydays. Most devotees choose the second path.

That means reopening saloons, dressing up shopkeepers in old-time garb and even re-enacting stagecoach robberies in the name of entertaining tourists. Popular "restored" ghost towns include Virginia City, Mont., which attracts about 70,000 tourists a year for entertainment such as the Brewery Follies. In chic and thriving Jerome, Ariz., artists and antique-store operators have settled near the old mining relics.

Third-Largest City

But not in Bodie. The town got its name from prospector W.S. Bodie (or Bodey, no one is sure of the spelling). He first spotted gold in July 1859 but died in a winter snowstorm a few months later, never profiting from his discovery. In the late 1870s thousands of miners streamed into the area. At its peak in 1880, Bodie was California's third-largest city, with nearly 10,000 inhabitants and famous for its saloons, brothels and periodic gunfire. Then the gold petered out. A local banker snapped up foreclosed buildings in hopes of a gold-mining revival; his descendants sold to California in three stages, the last in 1967, for about $59,000.

When Bodie became a state park, California officials inherited dusty chairs, magazines and curtains inside homes, which they left untouched. Meanwhile, the state restored Columbia, another old mining town about 100 miles west, and repainted it to look as it did in the 19th century. Bodie became the minimalist alternative.

Park workers soon discovered they had inherited a mess. True, intense ultraviolet light had turned the town's pine boards a pretty, deep chestnut brown. The 170 intact buildings ranged from the gold-assaying house to the miners' union hall. But leaky roofs and shaky foundations caused several houses to collapse into piles of boards. Menders jammed big new beams inside rickety houses, creating clumsy lumber "X"s that served as braces. Without some real, skillful intervention, Bodie was doomed.

Enter "arrested decay," state and federal grant money, and Mr. Sturdivant.

As repair budgets have grown, arrested decay in Bodie has turned into an art. Scraps of 19th-century tin cans, beaten flat until they closely resemble miners' original metal shingles, stop leaks in roofs. Broken windows make way for hand-poured glass from Germany, which provides the wavy, bubbly look of Bodie's original panes. Even nails aren't simple. Bodie's original houses are held together by jagged, square-headed nails that blacksmiths banged out one at a time. Park officials reluctantly use modern, round-headed nails for interior repairs that aren't visible to the public, but when it is time to fix an outside wall, maintenance workers scour old piles of lumber for abandoned original nails.

Maintenance chief Jim Anthony numbers each shingle on a roof that needs repair, so that old ones can be put back exactly where they belonged. The goal, says Mr. Sturdivant, "is to keep the buildings standing, but to make the town look just the way it did in 1962, when the last caretaker left." Rusted hinges and tilting outhouses are just fine. "You have to know when to stop," he says.

All this work has drawn attention—not all of it welcome. More than 130 miles from the nearest Interstate highway, accessible only by a dirt road, Bodie attracts as many as 35,000 visitors a month in the summer, though that total shrinks to 50 or less during harsh winter months. American Heritage magazine and others have singled Bodie out as the nation's "best preserved ghost town." But modern visitors have included rock-throwing teens who have broken mill windows.

"Bodie is incredibly fragile," says Susan Fitzgerald Reichert, head of the Sierra State Parks Foundation, which is contributing $385,000 this year to help preserve the town. "It could take millions of dollars to take care of everything."

To protect Bodie's character, the 58-year-old Mr. Sturdivant won't allow food to be sold in the town's small gift shop, for fear of litter. In 30 years at the park, he has made no effort to pave a three-mile gravel access road, figuring the bumpy trip will put visitors more in synch with the rhythms of long-ago life.

Grotesquely Curled Planks

Bodie's biggest fans wouldn't have it any other way. When William Alsup, now a federal judge, worked as a private attorney, he helped thwart an effort in the late 1980s to resume gold mining near Bodie. Preservationists worried that dynamiting a mile or so away would harm the town's buildings. Mr. Alsup's reward: the title of honorary state park ranger. He got to sleep inside one of Bodie's old houses one Halloween, and was entertained by roving park officials holding jack-o'-lanterns.

Mr. Sturdivant says he has dozens of buildings that need attention, and not enough money to fix them all. But he and his crews keep coming up with more ingenious ways to freeze time. Standing outside a miner's cabin one recent morning, Messrs. Sturdivant and Anthony debated about some grotesquely curled, wind-battered planks on a side wall.

"We can't nail them back down," Mr. Sturdivant said. "They'll splinter. And if we put new ones in, it will take years before they fade to be the right color."

"What if we just soak them for a week?" Mr. Anthony said. "They'll soften up. We can straighten them out. And then they'll take a nail again."

"I like that," Mr. Sturdivant said. "Let's do that."

Bodie is a museum ghost town, not a working gold town. The parks department maintains the 60-odd buildings and surrounding clutter of machinery in a state of arrested decay.

DETOURS

Continued From Page 7

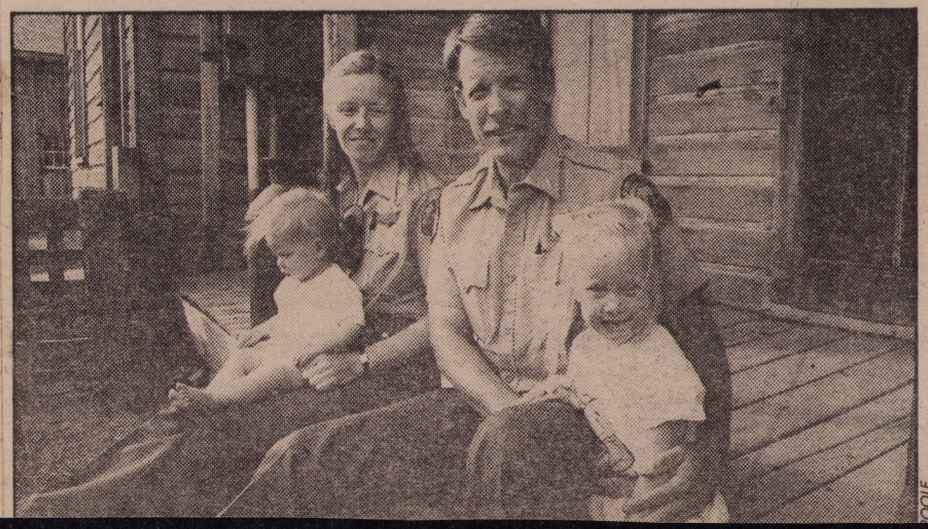
unplowed roads, dependent on snowmobiles to reprovision and get to town.

The Sturdivants keep a house in Bridgeport, the county seat, where Suzanne stays when she is working several winter days in a row. But she's always pleased to get back up the hill to the quiet of Bodie. A joke in the family is that if Brad moved on to a new assignment, Suzanne would find some way to stay behind. "A new mine would really change this place," she says.

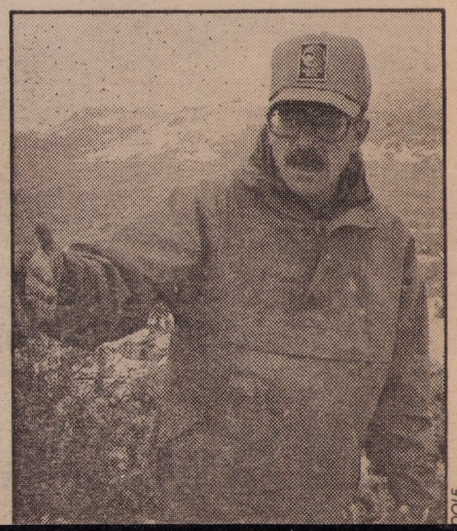
BY JASON M. GROW/THE CHRONICLE

Visitors stroll the old ghost town

At one time nine big stamp mills crushed ore in Bodie, and residents would wake up screaming in the night if the mills stopped, so disturbing was the silence.



BY WILLIAM POOLE



BY WILLIAM POOLE

BY WILLIAM POOLE

A street in Bodie with remaining dollops of spring snow. Will a gold mine disturb the ghostliness of this California state park?

Showdown at Bodie

Boom or Bust?

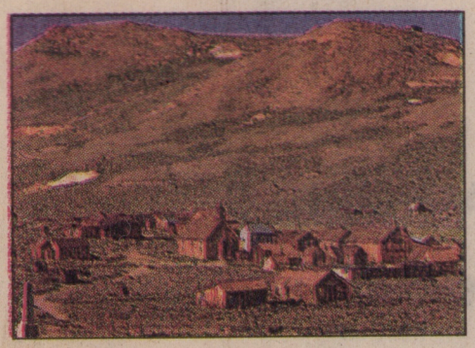
Can the ghost town of Bodie survive another gold rush? Mining companies say yes; opponents say no.

By KATHLEEN HENDRIX
TIMES STAFF WRITER

7-1-1992

BRIDGEPORT, Calif.—Mark Whitehead's Ford Bronco comes to a halt atop Conway Summit. Actually, Whitehead's been forced to stop his four-wheel drive by a CalTrans road crew. There is a half-mile of stalled traffic, and he is about to be late for his sons' Little League game.

He doesn't complain; rather he switches off the engine, lights a cigarette and explains that CalTrans is widening Highway 395 to four lanes at the summit. A model of patience, Whitehead looks out the window at the green meadows, snowcapped Sierra Nevadas and dazzling skies of God's country. He watches two yellow bulldozers eat the hill.



Suddenly he erupts:

"Look what's going on on that hillside! Look at the dust. Why isn't somebody howling about the destruction being done? See that black smoke going out of that diesel—have they got permits from Air Quality?

"Why do *I* have to deal with it in the mine? We seem to be singled out for special treatment."

He is being sarcastic.

Whitehead is project manager for Bodie Consolidated Mining Co., a subsidiary of the Vancouver-based Galactic Resources, Ltd. An energetic, restless man, he has been "sitting here doing nothing" at his Bridgeport office for the past 18 months, forced to a halt, he says, by "preservationist extremists or people who have no room for compromise or balance.

"I'm not a mining fanatic. I'm a fanatic for balance. There is a place for minerals in our society."

□

There is gold in these hills. At least 1 million ounces, with some guesses reaching skyward to 40 million.

The problem is that the hills surround Bodie State Historic Park. Thirteen miles off Highway 395, Bodie is a gold-mining ghost town, one of the best preserved in the West and a site that draws close to 200,000 visitors a year.

Bodie owes its existence to gold mining. There are those who think renewed mining would be another chapter in Bodie's life and those who are convinced mining would be its death. People are increasingly polarized, but they all say they love Bodie and want no harm to come to it.

Nothing infuriates Whitehead and his supporters more than assertions his company plans to start up a full-scale mining operation. All Bodie Consolidated wants to do, he insists, is continue exploration. Only when that is complete will it decide whether to propose a mining project.

And if it does, Whitehead is convinced that a mining operation will be compatible with the ghost town.

Galactic's preliminary plans referred to an open pit mine, but Whitehead insists any such pits would be completely out of sight from Bodie. And the probable 10 to 12 years of operation would be an economic boon to Mono County.

Mine foes say blasting, heavy equipment and trucks will shake or destroy the fragile buildings; dust will ruin the pristine air; cyanide will threaten the flora and fauna; inevitable noise and eyesores will ruin the whole "Bodie experience."

Donna Pozzi, who chairs the Save Bodie! Committee of the California State Park Rangers Assn., testified in May before a Congressional subcommittee on behalf of the Bodie Protection Act, which would remove 6,000 acres of public lands around Bodie from new mining claims. Valid private claims would be unaffected.

"We, as park professionals, have faced a great challenge in working to save Bodie from the elements, to slow down the ravages of time and the processes of nature," she said. "We believe the demise of Bodie would be accelerated by man's actions if a modern mine went into operation in the Bodie Bowl."

South of Bodie, in Mammoth Lakes—a town that depends on tourism—Nancy Whitmore and Dan Hayden, of the Eastern Sierra Citizens for the Protection of Bodie, are of similar minds.

"We are neither for nor against gold mining. We are against gold mining in Bodie," Whitmore says. "You take your position. You're for the history or you're for the progress." She discounts the supposed economic benefits mining would bring to the community: "It could wind up costing the taxpayer."

She and Hayden itemize: a temporary increased pressure on the schools, police, grocery stores, the infrastructure; roughneck miners living in mobile homes; the possible loss of a tourist attraction, followed by the eventual disappearance of most miners.

"That's *why* there's a ghost town," Hayden says.

"Workers are imported. They move out. There's a ghost town. It was boom and bust 100 years ago, and it's going to be boom and bust today."

The first 10 miles of the road to Bodie are paved; the last three are a hard dirt washboard. The approach is a vast expanse of sage-covered desert hills, patched with irises and white prickly poppies. Herds of sheep and cattle from nearby ranches graze in the low meadows, an occasional mule deer darts by, and pika, tiny rabbit look-alikes, scamper in the rocks.

The road bends and suddenly you glimpse Bodie in the distance.

About 120 structures, or about 5% of the town at its heyday, have withstood fire, the elements and vandals. When people talk of "the Bodie experience," they mean the silence, isolation, the eerie sense of removal from the 20th Century—a history cut short.

Waterman S. Bodey discovered gold here in 1859, but it was not until 1874 that miners hit the bonanza. By 1877 the gold rush was on.

The boom lasted just four years. Exploration and assessment continued, as did small-scale mining operations and occasional comebacks, such as the 1890s with the coming of electricity and the cyanide extraction process.

"There has been uninterrupted mining and exploration here for the past 135 years," Whitehead stresses.

Mining techniques and gold prices alternately spurred or stymied operations. "What was waste at $20 an ounce was ore at $35 an ounce," he explains. His company's interest soared in 1988 when gold was at $434; it has hovered just under $350 this year.

Bodie was on its way to being a ghost town by the 1930s. From the look of the place today, many left in a hurry—abandoning clothes on pegs, dishes in the cupboards, stock on store shelves, poker chips on the gambling tables.

One early settler, James S. Cain, bought a bank at the turn of the century and started buying up the town. His J. S. Cain Co. also acquired many mining claims and leased them out. Galactic now holds those leases.

The Cain family, however, remains involved.

Walter Cain, born in 1917 and a grandson to J.S., moved at age 9 from Bodie to Bridgeport and remains there today.

Two years ago, he went back inside his old home: "I saw the room where I had my feather bed," he says. "It was all familiar."

After World War II, Cain says, people started coming to see Bodie, and his family watched strangers "walk in and literally cart off the place."

The company hired a watchman to protect Bodie, he says, but approached the Parks Department about taking it over. In 1962, the state bought the 500-acre town site and its contents. J. S. Cain Co. held onto about 500 adjacent acres, site of most of the patented claims, and made sure that one road through town permitted ingress and egress for possible future mining.

Thousands of surrounding acres, with unpatented mining claims, are public lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management.

Gold-mining has changed. No longer is it old-timers panning for nuggets in streams or young men with handlebar mustaches disappearing into tunnels with picks and shovels.

Today the most widely used and economical way to mine gold is by open-pit, heap-leach mining. The process, perfected about 15 years ago, involves tons of crushed ore dug from open pits, stacked on a leach pad and doused with a cyanide solution that attracts the specks of gold.

Brad Sturdivant, Bodie's supervising ranger, has lived here since 1983 and says he would hate to see such an operation come to Bodie:

"There's always been some activity here. Mark is right about that, but nothing has ever been on the scale or scope that they have in mind. After World War II, it's not been mining *per se* but mostly exploration."

In 1988, Galactic bought Homestake Mining of California's mineral interests in 550 acres of private lands (mostly those of the J. S. Cain Co.) and several thousand acres of public lands. Galactic explored, drilled and assayed, but when the company requested an additional permit from Mono County in 1990 to drill 400 to 1,000 test holes, it hit a roadblock.

Because of public uproar and controversy, the county required Galactic to pay for an Environmental Impact Report, an unusual step for exploration, before drilling.

After many delays, the EIR draft has reached Mono County's planning office. A lengthy and involved process lies ahead before exploration can begin. If Galactic then wants to mine, another proposal and EIR are necessary.

In the meantime, H. R. 4370, the Bodie Protection Act, has passed from committee and is now before the U. S. House of Representatives.

People here can argue forever about the bill's effect. To Walter Cain, a director of the J. S. Cain Co., which stands to make millions from renewed mining, the issue is not about protecting Bodie: "It's to stop mining. With the controls that exist now, at all levels, I fail to see how these terrible things would happen to Bodie."

Nancy Whitmore says her group wants "to close all the doors where there could be a violation of the historical town of Bodie." And they want the doors closed now. "We can't wait until after the fact when it's too damn late. I don't want to take a group of people to Bodie and say, 'Look what happened.' "

Brad Sturdivant stops his vehicle at a bend in the road above Bodie. It is his day off, but the ranger is on a busman's holiday, telling a visitor, "Your experience starts here of what is supposed to be a ghost town."

Sturdivant points out Main Street, the cemetery and in the distance, the bonanza zone: Standard Hill, Bodie Bluff and, on the other side of town, Silver Hill, where "the first placer gold was discovered," he says.

Two days earlier, Mark Whitehead had stopped at the same spot.

Nodding toward Standard Hill and Bodie Bluff, Whitehead said, "What you're seeing is an expression of gold mining—an expression of the surface that was mined and has produced 10 million ounces of gold and 25 million ounces of silver in recorded production."

Whitehead, 45, and Sturdivant, 43, are permanently bronzed outdoorsmen and, while their emphases certainly differ, both seem in love with the vista they describe.

"I think Bodie is a real neat place," Whitehead says. "*No one* should destroy it. Not Galactic, not the park rangers, not anyone." He is convinced an active mine could add to Bodie's appeal as a tourist attraction, and says "I'm an environmentalist. It's why the heck I'm in this—being outside."

A geologist with a flare for the dramatic, Whitehead can drive behind Standard Hill—private property where his company has interests—and casually announce, "We just rode over one million ounces of gold." He walks across the bluff, lovingly picks up a veined rock and goes back to the Ice Age with its story.

A favorite game of his is to have visitors guess where Galactic drilled holes in 1989. He makes his point about reclamation. It is virtually impossible to tell: "I think we're pretty doggone sensitive to these things."

Sturdivant tells about the hawks, horned owls and bald eagles, antelope and occasional mountain lions that have been known to come around: "I see more wildlife here than I've ever seen in the Sierra."

He walks around the ghost town, answering tourists' questions, and shows the preservation work.

He unlocks the old schoolhouse and goes to an interior room where the rangers try, in their "spare time," to inventory anything left by former residents. He tells the lore: the little girl who when leaving Tonopah, Nev., wrote in her diary, "Goodbye God, we're going to Bodie"; the outlaws who inspired the "Bad Man From Bodie" legend; Bridgeport old-timers who tell of boyhoods in Bodie when they skied down the hill to school during harsh winters.

"Our entire job is protecting the park, from the inside and outside," Sturdivant says. "Galactic keeps saying, 'We won't do anything to hurt Bodie.' Well, sure. Not on purpose. They did not plan on a cyanide leak at Summitville either."

Galactic owns a mine in Summitville, Col., where federal and state agencies have accused the company of violations stemming from cyanide leaks into natural waterways.

Galactic contends it inherited the problem from previous owners, but the company has paid stiff penalties, anticipates further high costs and is engaged in reclamation and closure efforts there. It has caused sufficient problems that Galactic's 1991 annual report announces its intent to redirect itself outside North America, taking advantage of "lower costs and more reasonable environmental requirements."

While it continues Mono County exploration plans, Galactic has put its Bodie leases up for sale. There have been no takers.

Bill Reid is chairman of the Mono County Board of Supervisors. Tall and mannerly, he wears denims and cowboy boots to the office and looks more like a Sierra native than the displaced New Jerseyite he is.

Bodie is in his district and Reid's language is full of phrases—"private property," "local control," "Constitutional rights"—that key his arguments against passage of H. R. 4370.

"I have no preconceived notions whether Bodie should be mined or not," he says. "I say the environmental mechanisms are in place. Let's allow the system to work. The mining company hasn't even presented a proposal. If a proposal comes to us, let's evaluate it on its face."

He is open to mining, but says he's committed to protecting Bodie.

Three other supervisors agree. The sole opposition is Andrea Mead Lawrence of Mammoth Lakes. Lawrence, a 1952 Olympics double gold medalist in skiing, supports the legislation, opposes further exploration and says mining and the ghost town are incompatible.

"If you're saying, 'you can have it both ways,' and that implies an open pit—you cannot," she says. "There are some who believe, 'What the hell, it always was a mine.' There's a whole value system at stake. I come in from a different angle."

Lawrence scoffs at "it's only exploration" protestations: "You're going to let them come in; let them find the mother lode, and *then* you're going to tell them, 'You can't put a mine here?' Come on."

Area residents are also divided.

Coy Ziglar "sells fishhooks" at his sporting goods store on Bridgeport's main street and occasionally minds his wife's adjoining boutique. He thinks mining should be allowed as long as "you don't tear it up, contaminate the stream and you put the soil back. I know you can do it."

Studying his customer for a moment, he says, "You have gold on your hand. I have gold on my hand. We can buy it from Africa or we can go up there in the hills and get it."

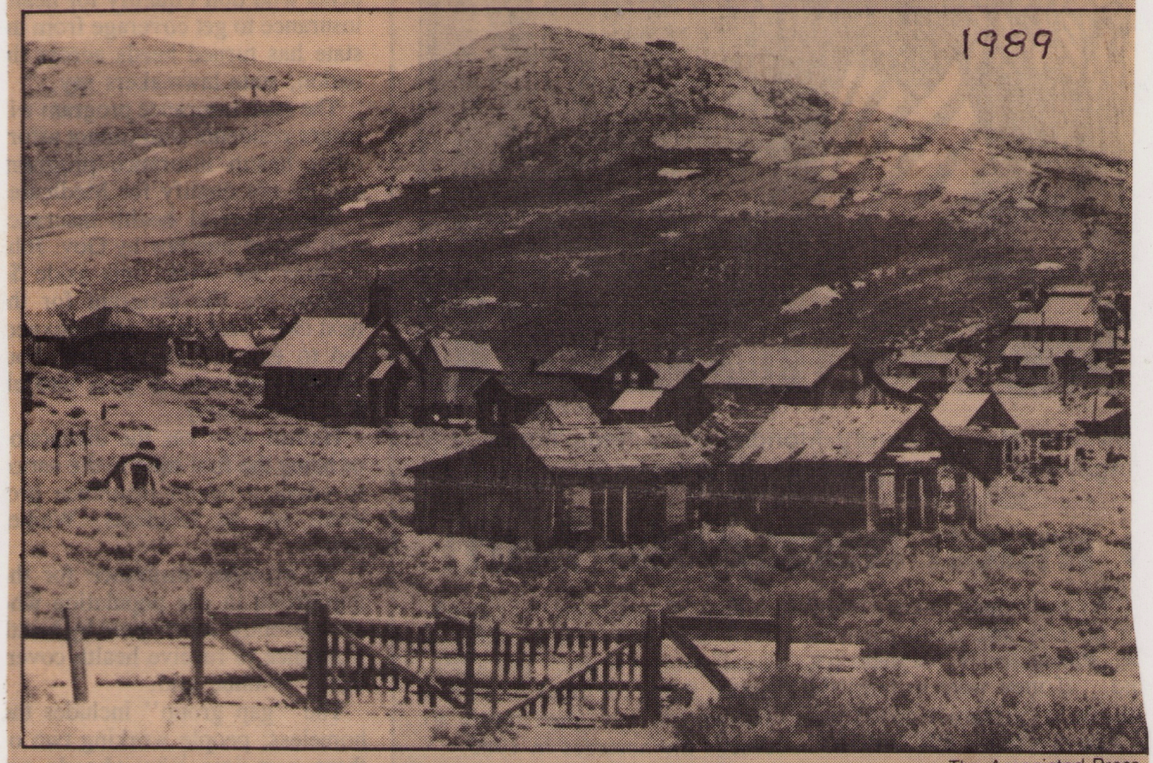
Directly across the street at Ken's Sporting Goods, proprietor Rick Rockel takes a break from a morning of selling fishing licenses and line to explain his support of H. R. 4370:

"I cannot put myself in the hands of the Board of Supervisors on this issue. . . . The temptation would be too much for them. We would make more money, sure, but if we wanted to make more money, we shouldn't be living in Bridgeport. . . .

"What are you willing to trade off? I am not willing to trade off Bodie for more money.

"You can always make more money. You cannot always make Bodie."

MINERS COME BACK TO HAUNT BODIE



The Associated Press

Environmentalists are voicing their concern over possible gold-mining operations in the bluffs overlooking the ghost town of Bodie, a state historic park since 1962.

Ghost town's caretakers spooked by new gold rush

Ramshackle buildings may not survive drilling activity

The Associated Press

BODIE — The hum of a drilling rig cuts through the stillness, occasionally blending with voices of tourists. Gold mining may be returning to what many people call the best preserved ghost town in the West.

But this time, state park rangers and environmentalists fear, mining may be more of a bane than a boon to this former boom town, a fragile collection of weatherbeaten buildings on the eastern side of the Sierra Nevada, about 180 miles east of San Francisco.

Gold was discovered here in 1859 and mining activity continued until the 1940s.

During its heyday in the 1870s and 1880s, Bodie had more than 10,000 residents and the reputation of being one of the wildest of Wild West towns.

A horrified minister, undoubtedly reacting to Bodie's gunfights, red-light district and 65 saloons, described the town in 1881 as a "sea of sin lashed by tempests of lust and passion."

That same year, a little girl wrote "goodbye, God, I'm going to Bodie" in her diary when her family moved to the camp.

Bodie's streets are quieter these days. Only two state park rangers and a repairman live year-round in the town, which has been a state historic park since 1962.

But the adjacent mining area, most of which is privately owned, has continued to draw attention from mining companies. There have been a number of efforts to find enough gold to make renewed mining economical.

Now a Canadian company, Galactic Resources, is drilling for ore samples in hills overlooking Bodie — roughly 1,500 feet from town, according to one estimate — in what company representatives and mining opponents describe as the area's most serious gold exploration project in memory.

And Mark Whitehead, chief geologist for the Bodie Consolidated Mining Co., a Galactic subsidiary, says odds are pretty good that the drilling rigs will reveal enough gold to make a mine worthwhile.

"If the price of gold does not drop and we continue the drilling program the way it's going, I would say there is a pretty good chance we would be able to have a mine here, provided we could get through permitting and those other considerations," he says.

Whitehead estimates that chances are 50-50 that a mine will be developed adjacent to Bodie, considerably better than the 100-1 odds that Galactic spokesman Jeff Raleigh says a company usually faces when it acquires a potential mine site.

The ghosts of Bodie can rest in peace

12-17-94

A HAPPY HOLIDAY season was guaranteed for those fighting to protect a California ghost town when President Clinton signed the California Desert Protection Act on Oct. 31.

A little-known amendment to the legislation gave greater environmental protection to Bodie, a State Historic Park and a National Historic Landmark a few miles north of Mono Lake. It draws nearly 200,000 tourists yearly.

The move to protect the nation's largest and best-preserved ghost town, where gold and silver mining flourished in the late 1870s, began in 1988. A notorious mine operator from Vancouver, B.C., Robert Friedland, and his company, Galactic Resources, took an interest in renewed mining near Bodie.

By the time Friedland visited Bodie in 1988, Galactic Resources had raised an estimated $300 million through sales of stock and debentures and built a "heap leach" gold mine on a mountain near Summitville, Colo., with key financing from Bank of America and engineering and construction assistance from Bechtel Corporation.

A Galactic press release in May 1988, signed by Friedland, announced the Bodie purchase by stating the "property acquisition is intended to accelerate the achievement of Galactic's corporate goal of 500,000 troy ounces of annual gold production within three years."

Unlike Summitville, Galactic encountered a preservation fervor in Bodie. A committee of the California State Park Rangers Association swung into action to fight development of a huge open-pit mine right next to Bodie. A citizens group, the Eastern Sierra Citizens for the Protection of Bodie, was formed.

A state Senate joint resolution, adopted in 1990, requested the federal government to protect Bodie. In 1992, Rep. Rick Lehman, the Democratic congressman whose district includes the ghost town, introduced the Bodie Protection Act.

Identical legislation was reintroduced in the U.S. Senate in 1993 by California's two senators, Barbara Boxer and Dianne Feinstein. The bill gained momentum when Galactic declared bankruptcy and the Summitville mine was named a Superfund site.

The Summitville mine, now abandoned, required a cleanup with a cost estimated by the federal Environmental Protection Agency at $100 million under the Superfund program. The state of Colorado is owed an estimated $20 million in bankruptcy claims.

Summitville, according to John Knebel, president of the American Mining Congress, is the result of "a bad operator virtually no one could control."

Friedland has moved on. Mark Whitehead, his former project manager at Bodie, moved to Burma last April to help run a copper-gold mine project that Friedland is pursuing in partnership with the Myanmar government. As Whitehead laughingly replied to a question about U.S. environmental protection just before he left, "Maybe that's why I'm going to Burma. You don't have to protect the long-eared bat. There is overkill in the U.S."

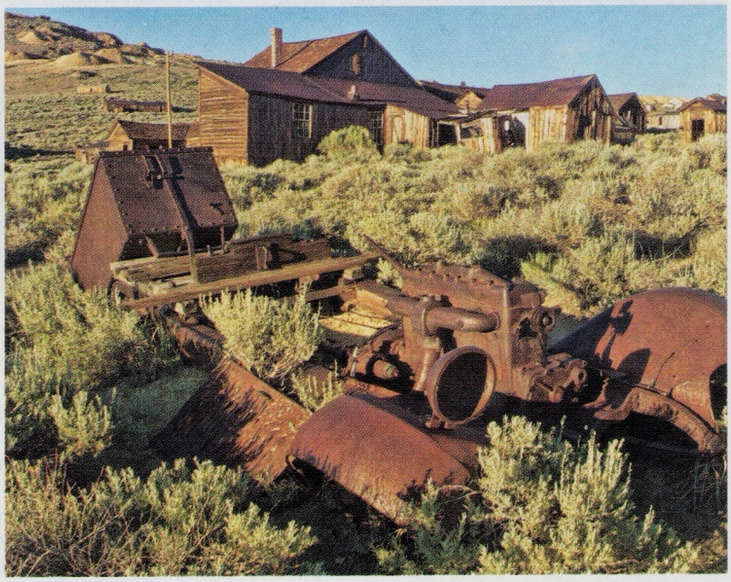
One can only wonder about the impact on Burma.

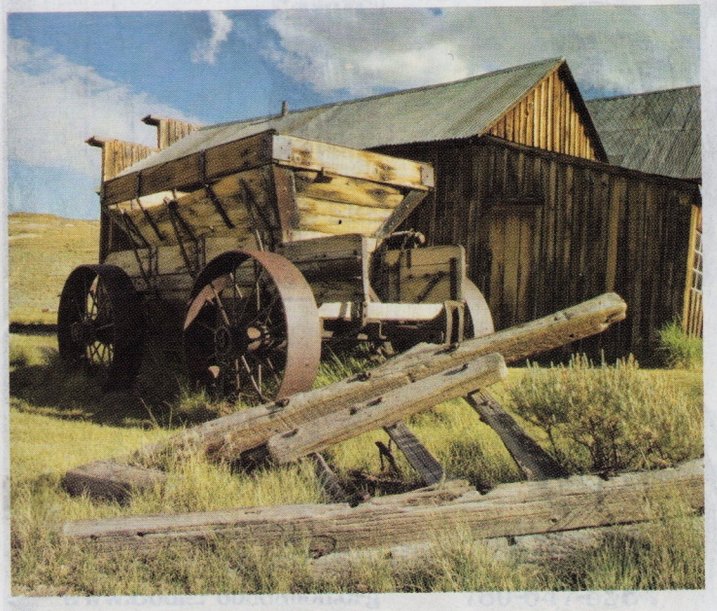
Dan Noyes works at the Center for Investigative Reporting in San Francisco.

Gold bars poured at the Standard Mine at Bodie, California. Each of the 12 bars weighed approximately 1,000 ounces (60 pounds). Gold in 1900 was selling for $16.00 per ounce which would make this entire lot worth $20,000. Today these bars could bring $40,000 each.

Mervin McKenzie Photo

Bodie is the largest and best preserved gold-mining ghost town of the old west. At its peak from 1877 to 1881, Bodie boasted a population of over 8,000 people and was once called the 'wildest camp in the west." Today, the dusty wind blows through the walls that listened in on tales of adventure and gold discovery more than a century ago. The entire town, over 200 structures, is preserved in a state of "arrested decay". This ongoing stabilization process keep the town looking like it did in 1962 when it became a California State Park and crowned a National Historic Landmark. Bodie is open year around however, winter storms will close the road and the only way to get to Bodie is by snow mobile or snow shoe. Summer season the park is open from 9am to 6pm. From Memorial Day through Labor Day, we offer daily tours and history talks. For those who want a more in-depth experience, you can reserve a private tour with a Bodie Historian. We also host several events throughout the summer which include three "Late Nights in a Ghost Town" – June 25 – July 30 – August 27 when the park stays open until 10pm. And you don't want to miss our biggest event of the year which is the annual Friends of Bodie Day, Saturday, August 13. Join Bodie Foundation and receive your personal dinner invite and stay afterhours for a "Special Evening Tour". For more information on Bodie, events, membership and online purchases, visit www.BodieFoundation.org or Info@BodieFoundation.org or (760) 647-6564.





BODIE FOUNDATION

CALIFORNIA STATE PARKS SINCE 1864

A town frozen in time

Bodie ghost town was mining camp after gold·rush

Times Staff Report

Bodie State Historic Park is a famous ghost town located about 45 miles north of mammoth Lake that has been well-preserved and has become a large draw for national and international visitors, with an explosion of growth in visitation in the past decade.

Bodie is now a California State Park and is located a few miles south of Bridgeport and about 45 minutes north of Mammoth Lakes.

Also interesting is the nearby town of Aurora, in Nevada, which, like Bodie, was historically mined and produced abundant gold and silver.

The Bodie Historic District, which includes Bodie State Historic Park, is recognized as a National Historic Landmark by the U.S. Department of Interior.

Bodie began as a mining camp of little note following the discovery of gold in 1859 by a group of prospectors, including W. S. Bodey.

Bodey perished in a blizzard the following November while making a supply trip to Monoville (near present-day Mono City, California), never getting to see the rise of the town that was named after him.

Gold discovered at Bodie coincided with the discovery of silver at nearby Aurora (thought to be in California, later found to be Nevada), and the distant Comstock Lode beneath Virginia City, Nevada. But while these two towns boomed, interest in Bodie remained lackluster. By 1868 only two companies had built stamp mills at Bodie, and both had failed.

In 1876, the Standard Company discovered a profitable deposit of gold-bearing ore,

which transformed Bodie from an isolated mining camp comprising a few prospectors and company employees to a Wild West boomtown. Rich discoveries in the adjacent Bodie Mine during 1878 attracted even more hopeful people.

By 1879, Bodie had a population of approximately 5,000–7,000 people and around 2,000 buildings. Over the years, Bodie's mines produced gold valued at nearly US$34 million.

Bodie boomed from late 1877 through mid- to late 1880. Gold bullion from the town's nine stamp mills was shipped to Carson City, Nevada, by way of Aurora, Wellington and Gardnerville.

Most shipments were accompanied by armed guards. After the bullion reached Carson City, it was delivered to the mint there, or sent by rail to the mint in San Francisco.

The Bodie Hills were also extensively used by Native American tribes and evidence of their past occupation is abundant. The range contains one of the highest densities of archaeological sites in the Great Basin.

Existing recreational uses of the Bodie Hills include hiking, hunting, mountain biking, birding, camping, auto-touring, off-road vehicle use, skiing and snowmobiling.

ON THE JOB

2-19-2011

Ghost Town Guardian

Mark Langner keeps watch over Old West history

By Audrey T. Hingley • PHOTOS BY DAVID CALVERT

MARK LANGNER stands atop Bodie Bluff in California's Bodie State Historic Park, hand shading his eyes from the sun's glare while surveying the remains of the once lawless gold-mining town.

"The whole town is at your feet," says Langner, 51, the park's supervising ranger. "This is one of the best views of the Sierras."

Langner embraces the quiet, desolate scenery and the solitude of the once-thriving town whose last residents departed more than 50 years ago.

And it's a good thing, too. For the last 13 years, he and his wife, Lynn, 51, have been among a handful of resident rangers who live year-round in several of the park's retrofitted historic homes, even during the wintertime when temperatures drop below zero and snow piles so high that Langner can climb up and peer into the second-floor windows of Bodie's abandoned buildings.

"This is the best backyard in California, with great outdoor recreation opportunities," explains Langner, whose early ranger work included stints at several California beaches. "I always wanted to live in a place where the elevation was higher than the population."

At an elevation of nearly 8,400 feet and spanning a thousand acres, Bodie is nestled in the Bodie Hills east of the Sierra Nevada. The area is the essence of remoteness, subject to high winds and brutal winters, with the nearest town—Bridgeport (pop. 818)—20 miles away.

During its gold rush heyday in the 1880s, Bodie boasted 2,000 buildings, including stores, brothels and 65 saloons, and a population of 10,000, making the town the third largest in California at the time. Gunfights, robberies and murders contributed to its reputation for wickedness.

The gold eventually ran out and two fires destroyed many of its structures so that, by the 1940s, Bodie had faded into history. In 1962, what remained of the town was designated a state historic park and a National Historic Landmark, with 200 buildings preserved in a state of "arrested decay"—meaning that the interiors are maintained just as they were left, furnished and stocked with goods—all serving as a living time capsule of life in the Old West.

"We keep the windows and roofs up and keep the foundations level. It's a struggle to keep these buildings from falling down," Langner says.

Neville Baxter of San Luis Obispo, Calif., who loves visiting ghost towns "for the history," calls Bodie "the gem of ghost towns."

"But I don't think I could live here in winter," adds Neville, 81, who toured Bodie with his wife, Rosemary, last fall before the first snowfall.

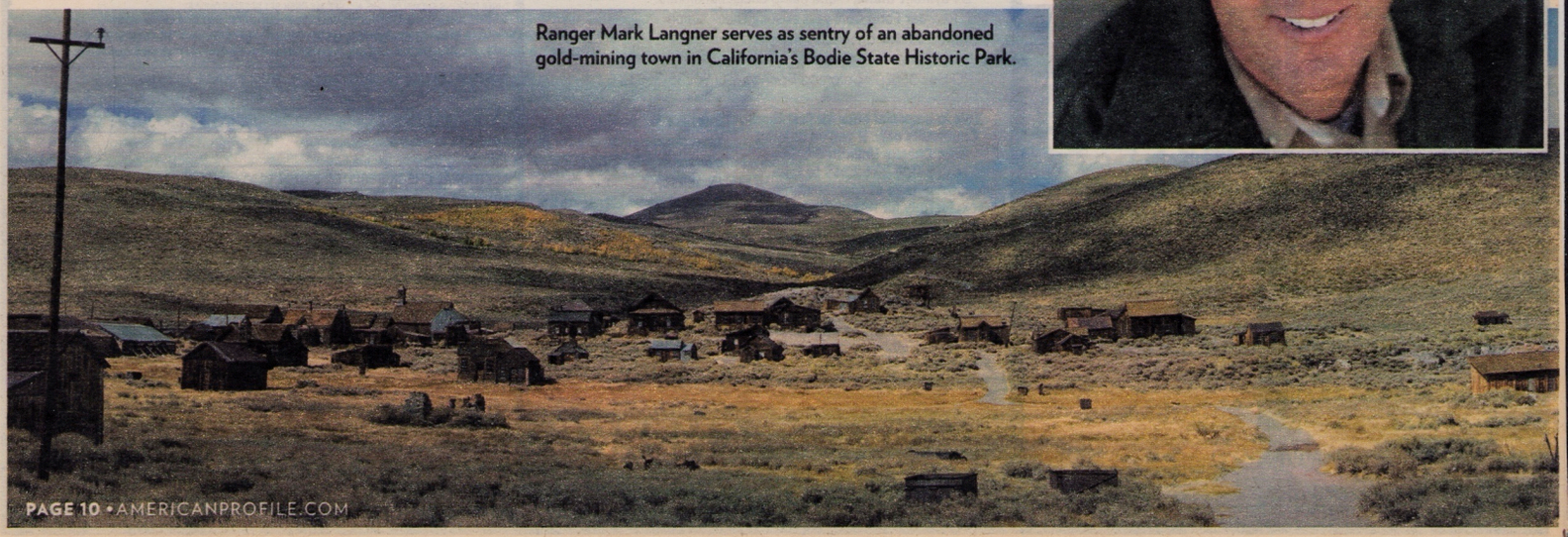
No matter the season, the state requires Langner to live on-site to provide law enforcement, fire protection and emergency maintenance.

Langner has closed the park only once in 13 winters when strong winds blew out windows and toppled a water tower in 2007. He's responded to four plane crashes, and several years ago rescued a group of skiers who got lost amid a fast-moving storm.

Fortunately for the ranger, his wife has an adventuresome spirit, too, and their 10-year-old cat, Willy, doesn't seem to mind the chilly temperatures or isolation.

"The place has really grown on me. It's a one-of-a-kind experience living here," says Lynn, a senior park aide who also works as a massage

(Continued on page 12)



Ranger Mark Langner serves as sentry of an abandoned gold-mining town in California's Bodie State Historic Park.

(Continued from page 10)

therapist in Bridgeport, weather permitting.

Given the stark living conditions, the Langners have learned to adapt. He grew up in the conservation-conscious East Bay area of San Francisco, but notes that "you have to leave your water running in winter here or your plumbing freezes."

An 800-megahertz radio keeps the line of communication open with other park officials, and a landline telephone and satellite Internet work except during storms.

Because the historic town appears frozen in time, Langner often thinks about the prospectors who once lived and worked in Bodie. "It amazes me that guys could be working underground, with mines up to 1,200 feet deep, and come out to three feet of new snow," he says.

Today, an appetite for history is common among most visitors, along with a mutual desire to protect the park for future generations—all of which make Langner's job rewarding.

"Each day is different—search and rescue, law enforcement, park interpretation, talking to visitors," he says. "I can honestly say I enjoy going to work every day." ★

Visit *parks.ca.gov/bodie* for more information.

To see more photos of Bodie, visit
www.americanprofile.com/bodie

Langner polices deserted buildings dating from the 1880s and preserved as a National Historic Landmark.

To preserve the ghost town atmosphere, there are no commercial facilities at Bodie, such as food or gasoline. There is a bookstore inside the museum where you may also inquire about daily tours.

Designated as a National Historic Site and a State Historic Park in 1962, the remains of Bodie are preserved in a state of "arrested decay," like the building above. Today, this once-thriving mining town is visited by tourists, howling winds and an occasional ghost.

VISIT THE HISTORIC BODIE VICTORIAN HOTEL

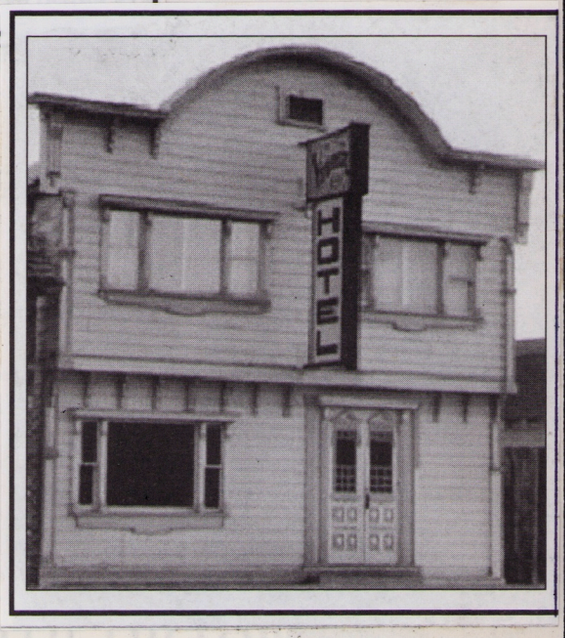
The Bodie Victorian Hotel was built during the Gold Rush era in Bodie. In 1886, it was moved to Bridgeport, about seven miles north via the old road, and restored as a hotel. During its day, it was a house of ill repute. Today, it is filled with antiques and history and maybe a ghost or two. The furnishings retain a historic authenticity while the hotel provides comfortable lodging, private baths and affordable pricing.

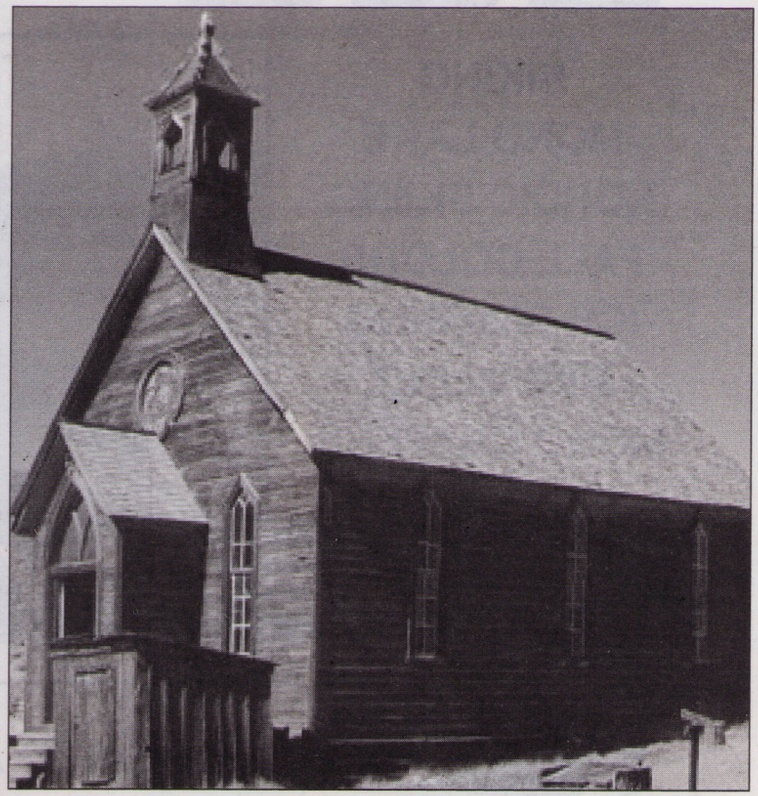
This beautifully appointed hotel is said to have several resident ghosts, including the inevitable woman in the white dress walking the halls at night.

Pranks are something the ghosts at the Bodie Victorian are known for. The playful spirits love to tease, especially those who don't believe in ghosts. Ask the plumber who was chased out of the building by a ghost or the maid who finds neat stacks of towels and sheets continually mussed up. Hotel guests have told of blankets being pulled off them in the middle of the night by a mischievous ghostly prankster. In spite of all this, the hotel has many repeat guests who enjoy the ghostly antics.

You can stay in the Napoleon Bonaparte room, which has two queen-size beds and faces Highway 395 as it slows to a stately pace through Bridgeport's business district.

The Bodie Victorian opens in late April for the spring and summer high season. For an authentic, historic place to stay at very reasonable rates, call 760-932-7020. The Bodie Victorian Hotel is located directly across from the historic county courthouse on Highway 395 in downtown Bridgeport.





The famous Methodist Church in Bodie State Historic Park is a favorite of visitors. The inside of the church is amazingly well-preserved.

The First Motorized Funeral in Bodie

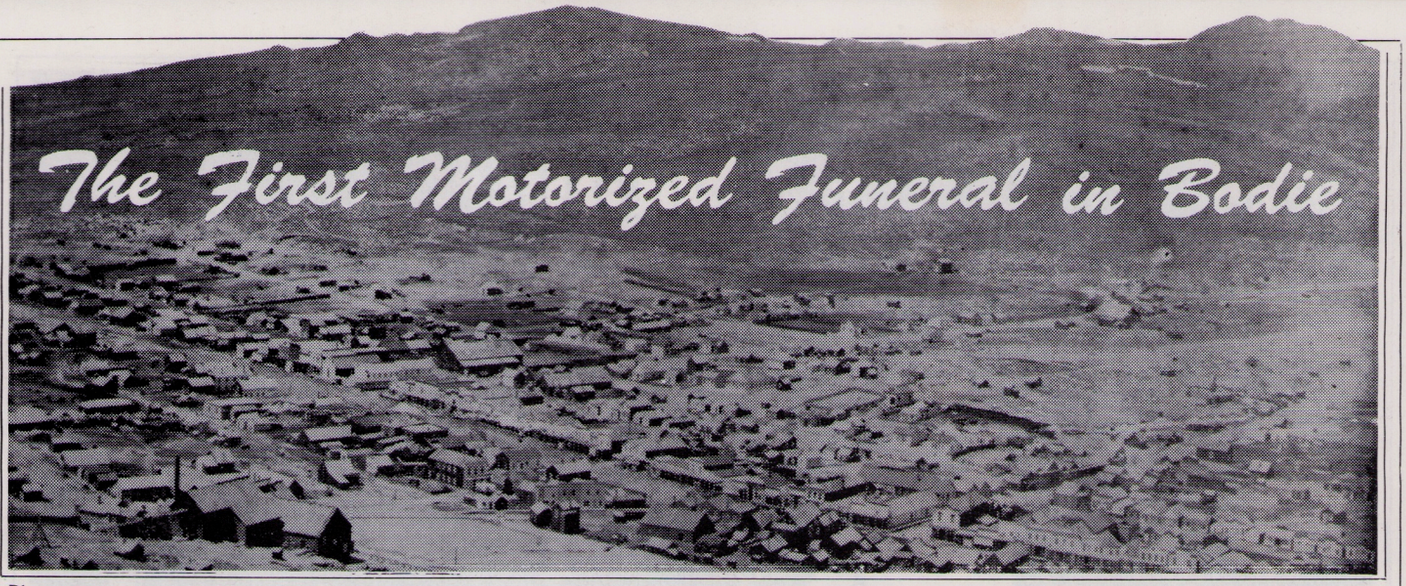


Photo courtesy of the Mono County Museum

The funeral rate of Bodie's early days was high due to the rough ways of living and the delays for medical attention caused by slow, poor transportation, although the hospital was a very good one and well equipped by the mining company.

The horse-drawn funeral hearse used in Bodie was a fancy one. It stood high with five large tassels on top of it, one on each corner and one in the center. With the exception of the corner posts, the sides and end walls were of solid glass.

The front end of the hearse was fastened to the front wheels by a single yoke high enough to go over the front wheels so as to be able to make short turns. On top of the yoke was the driver's seat, high in the air—much higher than the ordinary wagons.

The entire hearse was painted a shiny black including the wheels, with the exception of a few lines of gold trimming here and there. It also had two oil lamps about the size of large coffee pots mounted on the side of the driver's seat. The sight of the hearse was much different than that of ordinary wagons, and when the horses saw it they wanted no part of it; every time we had a funeral it was a big job to get the horses hitched to the hearse. They would kick, snort, and run around in circles, and when the funeral got under way they wanted to run. The driver just couldn't hold them back, but there wasn't anything else to do but hold them in line as much as possible and get the funeral over with as fast as we could. That's what the horses wanted more than anything else.

In 1922 an old-timer of Bodie passed away. His name was Jim Milatich, a very fine man. Jim had been a town official and had done much for the town in general, and he was liked by everyone, young and old. Several Bodie businessmen talked over the funeral arrangements with the undertaker. The idea was to give Milatich a nice funeral and try to keep the horses from acting up. Because the death rate at this time had dropped off considerably, the horses acting up seemed certain, and to have anything but a well conducted funeral for Milatich would have been an insult to a very good man's reputation.

While these men were standing by a potbellied stove where Milatich had spent many hours discussing town problems, the matter of giving him a good funeral seemed more important. One suggestion after another was volunteered with no results.

Then something happened that relieved the strain and was very welcome. Jim Cain, the banker, walked in and told the men that he had just seen Joe Scanavino drive by in his Model "T" pickup truck. Cain suggested to the men that they put the coffin in Joe's truck and let him take it to the cemetery and not bother with the horses. The others all agreed.

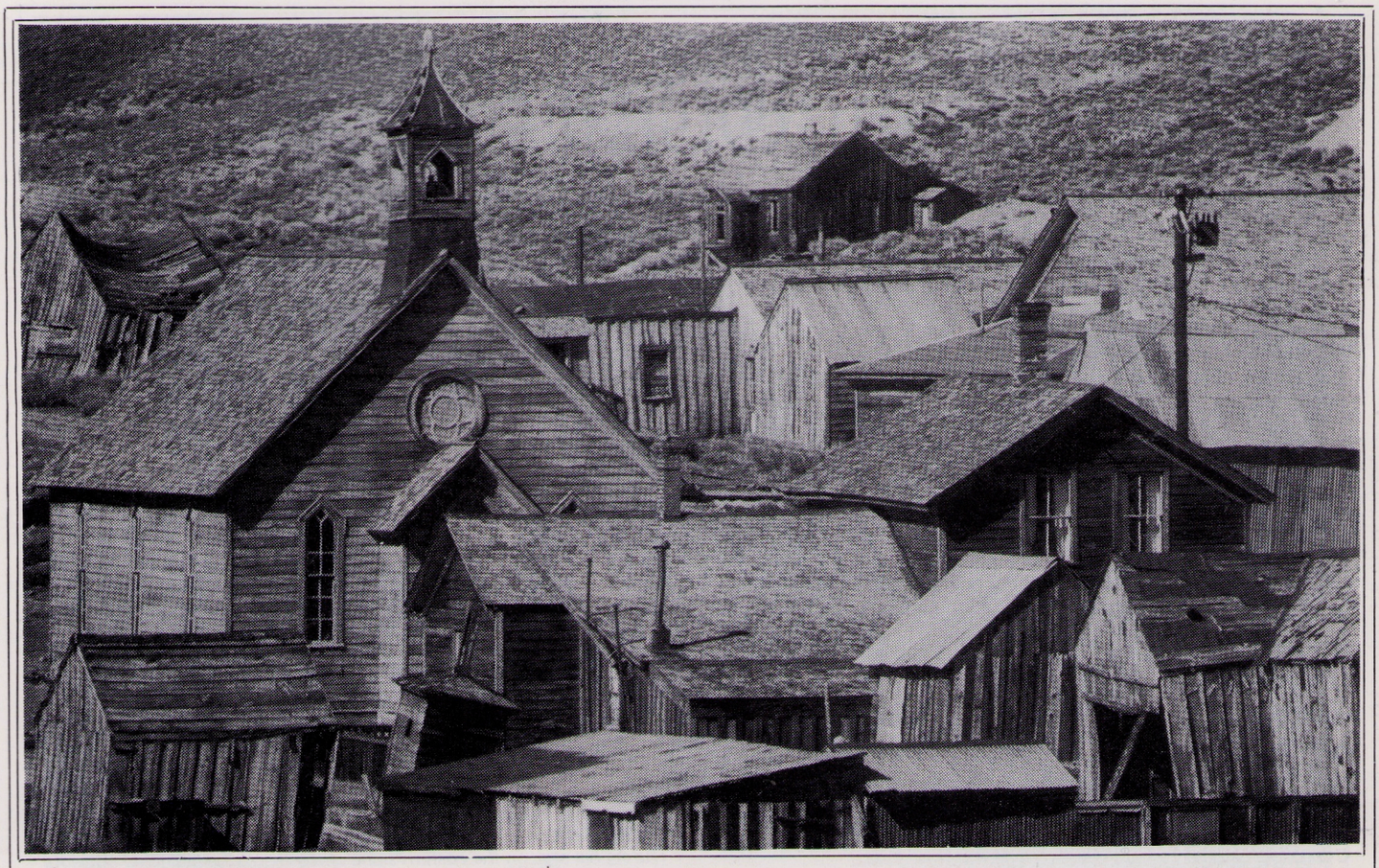
The undertaker told the men that Joe took very good care of that Model"T". He was always tuning it up, he said, and it ran like a sewing machine and never missed.

When Joe came over to the store, the men brought up the idea. Joe replied that he would do anything to give Milatich a nice, quiet funeral. He said Milatich was always looking forward to progress and he was sure Jim would have liked the honor of having the first funeral by motor power.

The man who was to drive the horses was certainly pleased to get relieved of that job, and he said he was glad the Milatich funeral would be one of the best Bodie had ever conducted. All agreed and drinks were served.

The Model "T" was then decorated with all sorts of black cloth. Flowers were tied onto the sides, the top, and even the wheels.

The funeral was set for 2 p.m. Many people were there and services were held at the Mineral Union Hall. Joe parked his Model "T" a block away from the hall and waited to be called. When the services were over the casket was carried out and set down on the porch in front of the hall's door. Joe was signalled to come, and it was necessary for him to turn around and back up to the porch. This was a short steep climb, and the porch was at the same level as the back end of the Model"T" with its tail gate down. Joe turned around and started to back up to the porch, but about halfway the engine started to miss. He lost power, so he had to pull ahead and try it again, but again he had no success. The engine was firing alternately on one, two and three cylinders. At least six tries were made with the same results.



Jim Stroup photo

Then a bystander whispered to Joe to go further out in the field, get some back-up running speed, and then give it the gas with the throttle wide open. Since any suggestion was welcome by that time, Joe did just that.

When he got about halfway up the hill, all four cylinders went to work with the throttle wide open, and the pickup went back so fast and struck the porch with such great force that it unbalanced the undertaker who was standing near the porch's edge. He fell forward face down in the pickup, struck his face on the floor and was knocked unconscious. Joe heard the noise but thought it was the casket being loaded in. Several people waved and yelled not to move when they saw the undertaker fall, but Joe thought they were telling him to go ahead to the cemetery. He thought they were afraid the engine would die and that he might not get it started again, so he took off. About a hundred men, women and children standing outside the hall started to run after Joe hollering for him to stop, but with the roar of the engine on one to three cylinders, Joe could only hear their shouts, and to him it sounded like "keep going and don't stop."

He kept going and was pulling away from the people pursuing him. About fifty cowboys who had come on horseback to attend the funeral saw that the others were losing the race, so they jumped on their horses and took after him. By this time several hundred people plus the ones on horseback trying to stop Joe got the narrow streets and roads blocked. Some took routes between buildings, the ones on horseback took routes through the sagebrush, and kids climbed on building roofs; the streets, roads, and surrounding hills on the way to the cemetery was plastered with townsfolk and men and women on horseback, but Joe beat them all to the cemetery.

He pulled up alongside the open grave and set the brakes, feeling very glad that the engine hadn't stalled on him on the way. After setting the brakes, he turned and glanced back just at the same time the undertaker regained consciousness and raised up a bit. The man's entire face was covered with blood, and his nose was smashed in. Joe, still thinking he had the casket on the truck, thought the body of the deceased had been thrown out. He didn't stop to ask any questions, but took off running across the cemetery with strides that took him over all the fences.

Just about this time, the men on horses arrived and saw Joe going flying across the cemetery, so they took after him. He saw them coming and thought they were trying to catch him to punish him for messing up Milatich's funeral. Joe often won foot races at celebration contests, so he wasn't easy to catch. In fact he was halfway out of town when they caught up with him and brought him back to get his Model "T" and start all over.

When they got back, they found out why the vehicle hadn't been running so well. Joe always carried a five-gallon can of water and a five-gallon can of gasoline in his pickup. While the pickup was being wrapped in black cloth before the funeral, one of the boys who was trying to help had put the five gallons of water in the gas tank instead of the gasoline. After the gas tank was straightened out, the funeral went on in very good order, except for being an hour late. □

Cursed by isolation, brutal winter weather, and legendary violence, the infamous eastern Sierra mining center of Bodie reached its peak population of 10,000 in the 1880s, before entering a long period of depleting mines and population that ended in the town's virtual abandonment in the 1940s. A true, intact "ghost town," Bodie was protected from vandalism by the family that owned the land on which it stood, until it was acquired by the state as one of the most unusual and authentic of all western historic parks. The hearse pictured in the photograph (ca. 1900) could be rented—complete with plate glass sides, feather plumes, and silver roof urns—for $20. This hearse is one of two similar vehicles still on display in the Cain Museum at Bodie State Historic Park in Mono County. Although it is considered a priceless, irreplaceable National Historic Landmark District, Bodie's very survival is in jeopardy in the early 1990s. Relying on claims derived from the outdated 1872 federal mining act, an industrial mining conglomerate has taken steps to begin extensive open-pit mining on the ridge above the park, which opponents charge will chop off the top of the mountain, severely mar the authentic historic vistas still possible in the town, and speed up the deterioration of the town's fragile buildings because of blasting and vibrations caused by heavy truck traffic. Possible loss of a valuable part California's heritage has resulted in the formation of *Save Bodie!*, a committee of the California State Park Rangers Association, to oppose the mining project. *CHS/Ticor Collection, University of Southern California.*

"Goodbye, God! I'm going to Bodie."

So said the little daughter of a family bound for Bodie in its prime, and she was dutifully quoted in a Truckee newspaper of the period.

Bad and bawdy—that was Bodie in the late 1870's. In its heyday over 10,000 people lived in the Mono County town. The ramshackle camp they built—sprawled across a blizzard-swept plain east of the Sierra—boasted of three things: the wildest street in any Western mining camp, the wickedest men and the worst climate.

Bodie's buildings stand empty and lonesome now, gazing on the occasional tourists who prowl in the sagebrush and peek in the dark windows.

It's worth a visit; you'll never encounter anything else quite like it.

The camp was named for a prospector, Waterman Bodey, who settled in the Mono area in the late 1850's. In 1859 he was lost in a snowstorm and died of exposure. The following spring his friends found his bones and buried them on the spot. The town that grew nearby was named after him, although the spelling was changed by a sign painter.

For a few years the population of Bodie rose slowly, as miners came over the Sierra from the Mother Lode to seek gold in the new Mono diggings. There was enough promise of riches in the bluffs surrounding Bodie to keep them there.

Then, in 1878, a fabulous vein was uncovered in a local mine. Soon after, a telegraph line was completed to the town, and the first message to the outside read: "Bodie sends greetings and proclaims to the mining world that her gold mines are the most wonderful yet discovered."

The word spread quickly. The following winter there were over 10,000 people in town.

The environment of Bodie was not kind to the newcomers. The town's elevation is almost 8,400 feet, so that there was deep snow much of the year, and little contact with the outside. The miners and their families hastily put up flimsy wooden dwellings which were scant protection in the harsh winter. Hundreds died of disease, and almost as many died in violence bred by the cruel and confining environment.

For a few years, the Bodie diggings produced fabulous ore—a total of almost $100,000,000 was brought up from the earth below Bodie. Stock in the largest mine rose from 50 cents to $54 a share.

The miners enjoyed their wealth as best they could in the drab town—they poured whiskey down their throats, and sang, and gambled, and smoked opium, and quarreled over the ladies, and shot off their guns.

The town druggist reported in later years that for a while hardly a morning went by without a dead man on his doorstep.

But Bodie was not all bad. It supported a school and two churches. (However, the bulk of the funds for the churches was contributed by the saloons, bordellos, and opium dens.)

Bodie's boom was brief—by 1890, just 2,000 people were left in town. Although the mines were still operating, it was apparent that they were slowly giving out. In the first decades of the twentieth century, Bodie was inhabited by old men and their memories.

There was a slight resurge of activity in 1939, when, with new mining methods, the old tailings were worked over for remaining gold. But with the advent of World War II and the soaring prices of mining, Bodie died forever.

For years Bodie slept alone under the deep winter snows, and in the short summers was peopled only with curious tourists. Many rudely carried off the valuable old furniture and other artifacts, or vandalized the unprotected buildings.

In recent years the State of Califor-

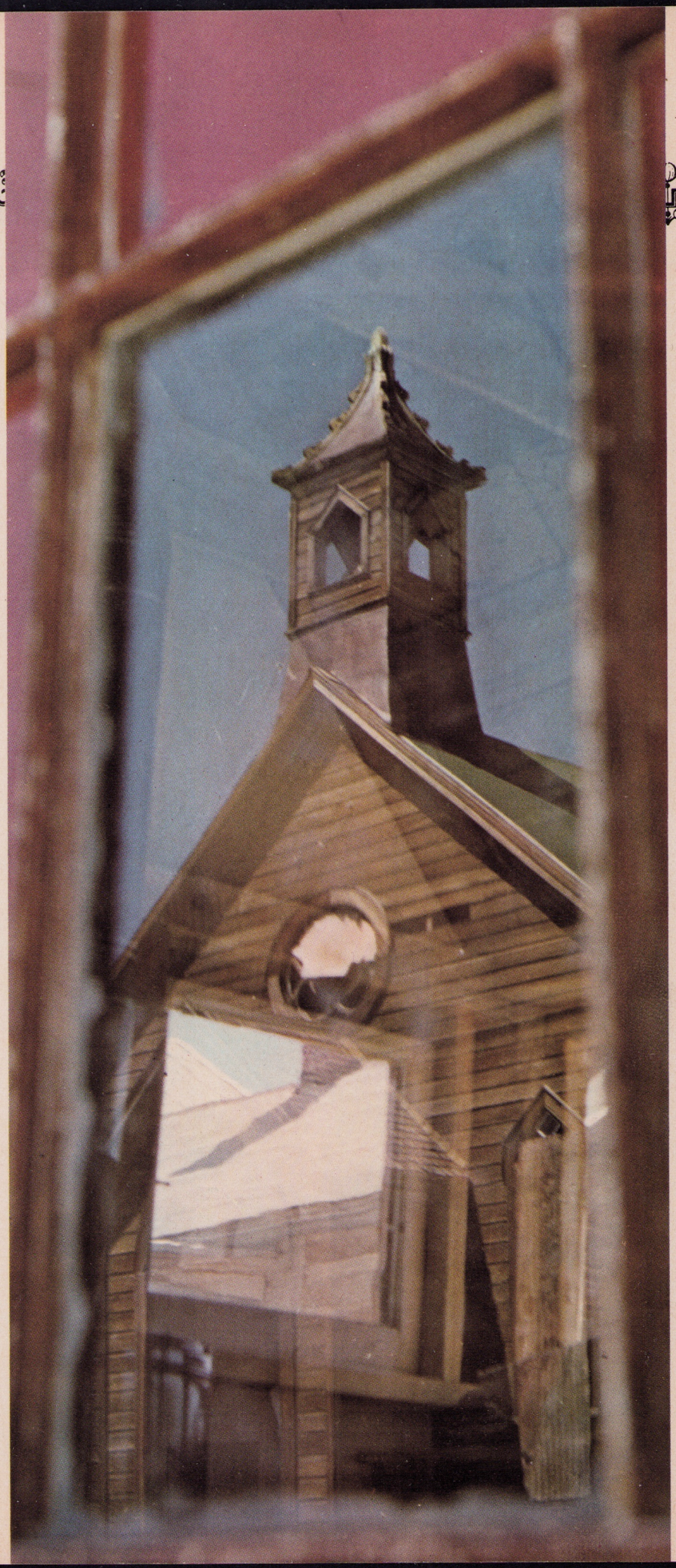
nia realized that this durable ghost town—with 168 buildings still standing—should be preserved. In 1962 the Division of Beaches and Parks established Bodie State Historic Park and on September 12 it will be dedicated as a National Historic Landmark.

The plans for Bodie are noble. Norman Cleaver, the park supervisor, explains that every effort will be made to maintain Bodie's character as a ghost town. "The face of Bodie," he says, "will never be lifted." Concessions will not be allowed in town. The state's essential purpose is to protect the old camp from vandalism and looting, to make the structures safe for visitors, and to maintain the town in "a state of arrested disintegration."

Floors of the old buildings will be stabilized from underneath, so that the original boards remain in place. Roofs will be repaired to keep rain off the furnishings below. Presently there are rudimentary sanitary facilities, and in the future there may be a picnic area. However, there are no other tourist facilities in Bodie—no gas stations, no restaurants, no overnight accommodations or campgrounds. (Nearest AAA-approved motels are in Bridgeport and Lee Vining.)

Bodie can be reached by two dirt roads, each about 15 miles long. One branches off Highway 395 between Lee Vining and Bridgeport, and the other off Nevada Highway 31. (See your CSAA Lake Tahoe Region map for more details.)

When the roads are dry, they are safe for passenger cars. In wet weather, the rangers have difficulty keeping even a jeep on the road. You should check locally before venturing onto the dirt roads—the sheriff's office in Bridgeport main-



tains radio contact with Bodie rangers regarding driving conditions. The rangers also post signs at the entrances to the Bodie roads to warn of poor conditions.

The best time to visit the town is during the relatively warm and dry months of July and August, and the first days of September.

State regulations require visitors to leave their cars on the main street, and explore the town on foot.

You can stroll along the main street, peering in the windows of old false-front business houses. Some still contain furnishings and dry goods left behind when Bodie's decline began. Several old buckboards and wagons have been drawn up to the boardwalk for public inspection.

Beyond the main street, the remains of Bodie are less orderly. You'll stumble on the bones of carriages, lean and sun-bleached, or rusting automobiles squatting in the grass, their tires stolen and their windshields cracked. Whimsical outhouses tilt this way and that behind gaunt homes containing nothing but forgotten dreams and the rustle of torn wallpaper. Slanted steps lead to doors hanging on their hinges, and snaggle-toothed picket fences lean into the weeds.

As you poke through the sagebrush, your shoes may strike an old shovel, or you may find a rocking chair creaking in the wind.

On a hill overlooking the town lies the cemetery, its wooden markers worn free of inscription and leaning into sinking graves. The fenced portion was reserved for the "respectable" folks, the more populous area outside for the bad men and their women. The imposing urn-topped stone monument was bought by the townspeople for the grave of Waterman Bodey, whose bones were dug up and ceremoniously brought into town in 1879. But when the citizens heard the news of James Garfield's assassination, they instead inscribed the stone to the memory of the dead President. Such is the folly of human affection—Bodey's bones now lie buried up the hill in an unmarked grave.

The impressive gray building on the flanks of the opposite hill is the Standard Mill, once the most lucrative in town. Heed the warning signs and don't walk into the mill area—the hill is dangerously undermined with old tunnels and shafts, many filled with water, and hikers might fall into them. Bodie rangers have no facilities for rescue.

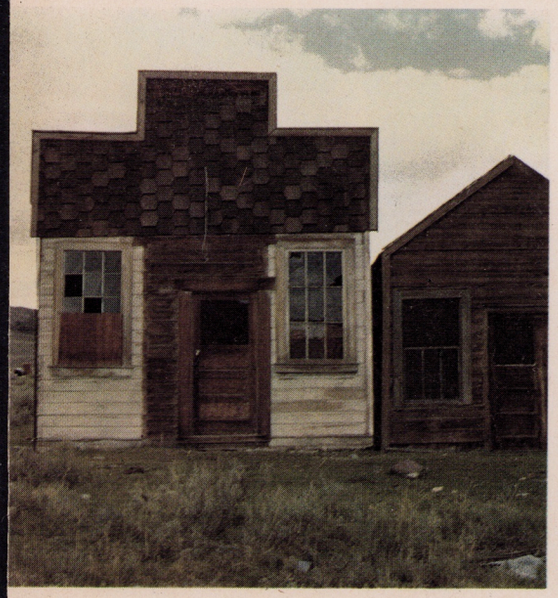
The brick vault on the main street below is all that survived of the Bodie bank after a fire in 1932.

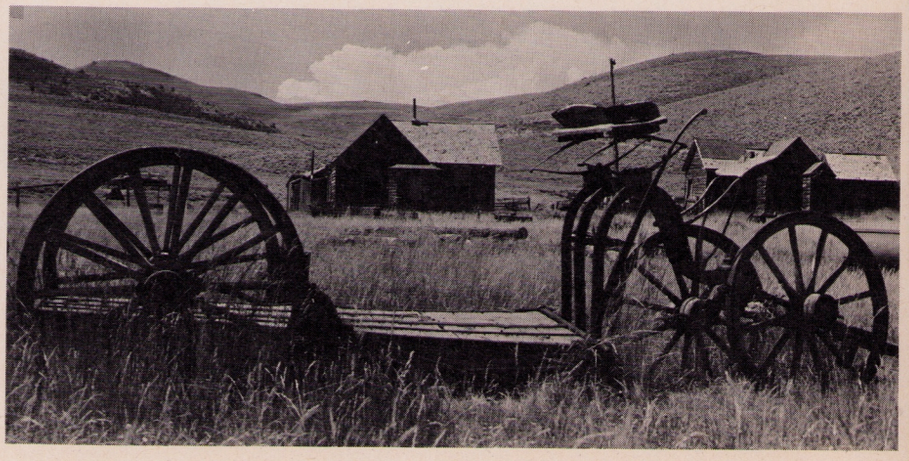
At the edge of town is the prison, surmounted by a hand-scrawled sign —"Bodie's Jale House." The building is small considering the reputed number of bad men in Bodie.

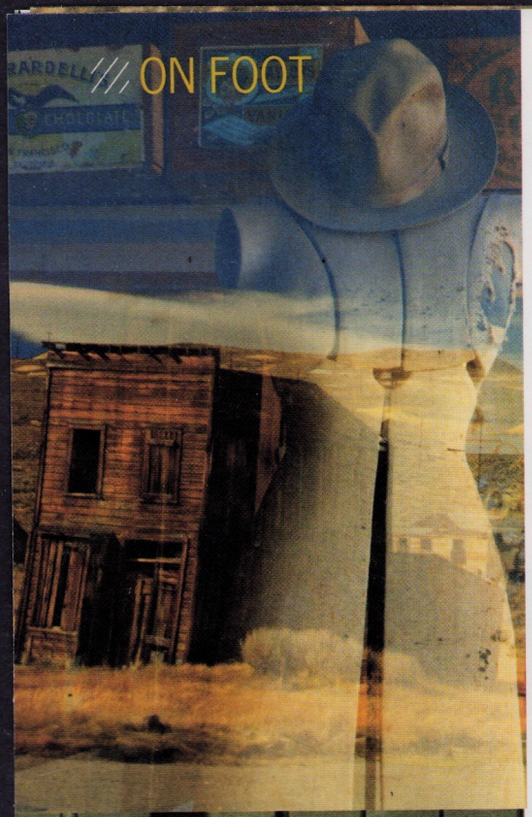
You should leave well before sunset to avoid driving on the bumpy roads after dark. In the late afternoon, most tourists clear out of town, taking the noise of their chatter and their automobiles with them.

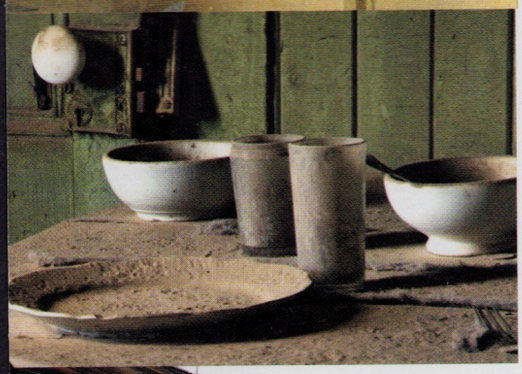
Then the dying sun creeps down from the graveyard and gleams on the silvery weathered fronts of the buildings, their ghosts peering out through tattered curtains.

In the silence you can imagine the pianos tinkling in the saloons, the boisterous shouts of the miners, the squeals of the painted ladies. And you can almost weep for the old, riotous, forgotten days of Bodie.







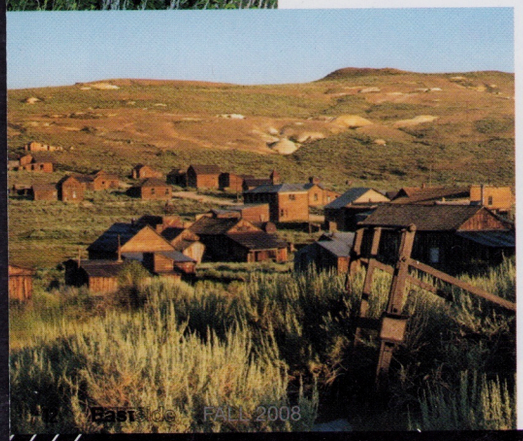


[Top] **How many souls are trapped in here?**
PHOTO: LONDIE G. PADELSKY

[Above] **Bodie's state of arrested decay.**
PHOTO: LONDIE G. PADELSKY

[Left] **Plenty of life left here.**
PHOTO: DAVIS

[Below] **Late afternoon light.**
PHOTO: DAVIS



The Spirit of Bodie

A Walking Tour of the Ghost Town

LATE AFTERNOON LIGHT FILTERED IN as the air chilled. Even in summer, the Bodie basin is cooler than other Eastside spots at similarly high altitudes. In fall, the aspens dotting the hillsides turn sooner than anywhere else. Autumn is a great time to take a walk through California's official ghost town, where aspen leaves are outshone by colorful history and enduring legends.

"It's real," said Jack Shipley, former California state park ranger, of the place that was his "office" and home for more than a decade. Bodie is not reconstructed, or cleaned up. Instead it's left as-is. "In 1912, the store was locked up with stuff in it," Jack explained—the same stuff you see through a wavy glass window today.

Perhaps it's the state of "arrested decay" that imbues so much spirit in Bodie's weathered wooden buildings. That now-yellow lumber, not gold, is how Bodie resident James S. Cain made his fortune. Cain is to thank for the fact that Bodie is intact—he bought the local bank and his family eventually owned all the buildings that were preserved when Bodie became a state historic park in 1962. And Cain's house is the site of the most intriguing ghost story in this ghostly town.

We learned all this just out of the parking lot, having set out on an exploration of Bodie's spirited past via a clockwise loop from the car, starting at the north end of Fuller Street.

Although most of the ghost stories come from the rangers like Jack who've lived here year-round, these keepers of Bodie seemed reluctant to perpetuate the tales.

Jack pondered the term 'ghost town' as we passed Bell's Machine Shop. Bodie in its prime, in the 1870s and 1880s, he said, saw maybe 5,000 deaths and had a much lower murder rate than a city like New York. "Why isn't that a ghost town?" he asked.

We passed Fuller Street and took Union toward the Mendocini house, where Jack whetted our appetite for the paranormal. Upon entering the building for the first time, a ranger was overtaken with the scent of garlic, the steam from boiling water. But no one had been in the house for decades—since Annie Mendocini lived and cooked here.

Jack continued his philosophical line of questioning as we headed east. "What is a ghost? Someone who died here? Or is it the energy of intense experiences?"

If it's the latter, then Bodie certainly is haunted—from climatology to history, this is a beyond-wild place.

Jack paused a moment as we moved north toward what was Chinatown. No structures remain, a poignant reminder of the less-than-zero status given to Chinese in the US one hundred years ago, especially in western mining towns. For people from a centuries-old, refined culture, this meant hard work in hopes of enough money to be buried with dignity in China. Jack wondered forebodingly about spirits. How many souls were trapped here, unable to return home?

> On a class trip the year before, eighteen different images, from eighteen different cameras of the Cain house window developed blank.

Bodie felt harsh, hiking uphill past the Standard Stamp Mill. But a hop vine growing in front of the the Conway House on Green Street reminded us that there's plenty of life left here. We peered into the windows of the Wheaton & Hollis hotel bar and it felt like happy hour as resident park employees headed back to their quarters for the night.

A first-year made for his room at the Spence Gregory house, trying not to roll his eyes when asked about otherworldly encounters. Jack, however, noted several accounts of an unseen body sitting down at the foot of a bed in that same room, leaving leg and hand impressions on the quilt.

Head Ranger Mark Langner didn't want to talk ghosts either, but let slip that one of his employees was too "creeped out" to sleep in a certain room in the D.V. Cain house further down Green Street.

We chatted with Mark just across the way from James Cain's home, once the grandest residence and, as park headquarters, still in good shape. For some reason, though, no rangers choose to bunk there now.

"It's the most haunted," Jack explained before finally divulging his own ghost story from his ranger days. A photography instructor stopped Jack to report a strange phenomenon. On a class trip the year before, eighteen different images, from eighteen different cameras of the Cain house window developed blank.

Perhaps the house has secrets it wants to keep, stories like that of a Chinese woman employed as a housekeeper and nanny by Cain. Beautiful and noble, the housekeeper was fired by Cain's wife, who suspected her husband of being unfaithful to her with the housekeeper. Delilah Cain threw the maid out on the street on a cold winter night.

Embarrassed by the loss of stature and alone in the world, the woman wandered off in the snowstorm, never to be seen or heard from again, perhaps until the Cain house was reinhabited by state park rangers. When Jack started at Bodie in 1984, his predecessor told him about the Chinese woman—and her more recent manifestations. That ranger was living in the Cain house when friends and their kids came to visit. The children slept in the housekeeper's former quarters. Unaware of the house's history, the children came downstairs the next morning and asked, "Who is the nice Chinese lady who read us a bedtime story?"

The sun had set and we finished the loop back to the parking lot behind a family of sage grouse, further evidence of the spirit of Bodie, alive and well.

Bodie State Historic Park is open year-round, though State Route 270 closes during winter. Go to www.parks.ca.gov for more information. ■

–S.C.

LIFE AFTER DEATH AT BODIE BRINGS GHOST TOWN TO LIFE

The finest California gold-mining ghost town is a Scenic 395 attraction in the hills just south of Bridgeport.

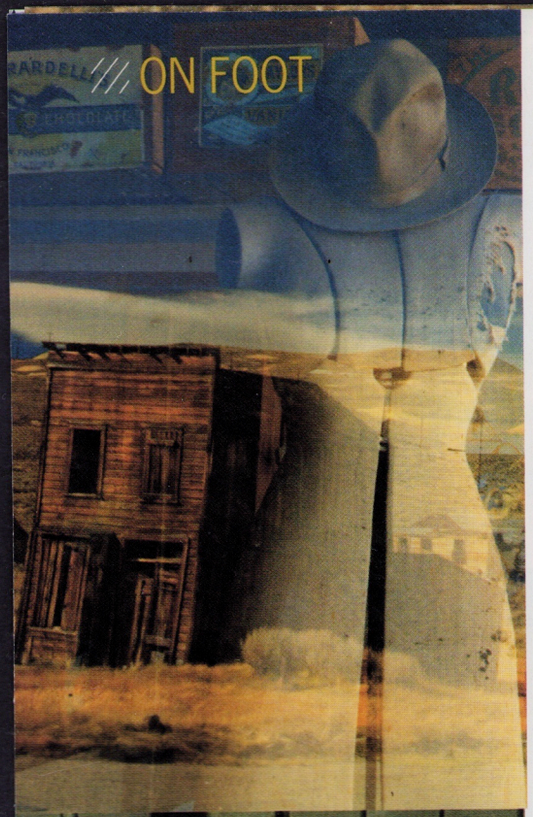
Bodie State Historic Park preserves the amazing 19th Century boomtown of Bodie. A walk down the deserted streets, over the old boardwalks, into the abandoned buildings, and through the old cemetery provides a glimpse into life on the 1870s frontier.

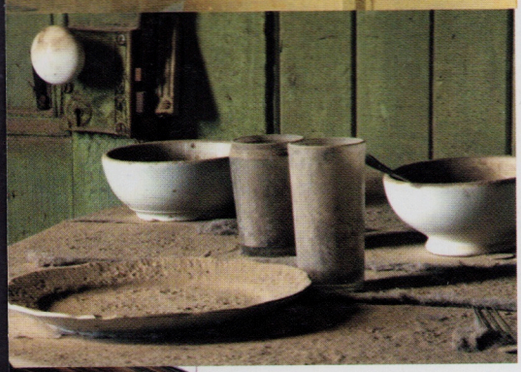
By its nature, a gold rush town went up in a hurry and came down almost as fast. That makes Bodie doubly unique, as so many buildings remain, preserved in a state of "arrested decay," where minor work is done to prevent outright failures of walls and roofs without altering the buildings themselves. The resulting experience for visitors, especially on a windswept autumn day when few others are around, is a step back in time that mere words or pictures cannot duplicate.

A state historic park preserves the haunting gold rush boomtown of Bodie in the hills near Bridgeport.

Summertime is when most Bodie visitors arrive. It's a nice place then, with high temperatures moderated by the 8375' elevation. Early in the day is best for avoiding crowds that might deter your ghost-town experience. Many visitors, especially returning ones, opt for spring or autumn, when the more deserted town brings the ghosts back to life.

To reach Bodie, drive seven miles south of Bridgeport on Highway 395. Take State Route 270 13 miles east. The museum at Bodie is open daily during the summer. The park itself is open from 8 a.m.–7 p.m. during the summer, 9 a.m.–4 p.m. during the rest of the year. Call 760-647-6455 for additional info about ranger-led interpretive programs.



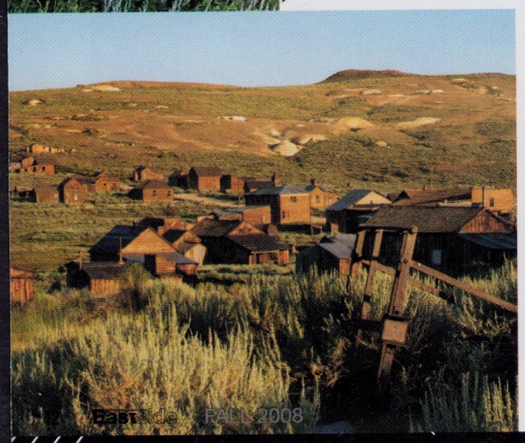


[Top] **How many souls are trapped in here?**
PHOTO: LONDIE G. PADELSKY

[Above] **Bodie's state of arrested decay.**
PHOTO: LONDIE G. PADELSKY

[Left] **Plenty of life left here.**
PHOTO: DAVIS

[Below] **Late afternoon light.**
PHOTO: DAVIS



The Spirit of Bodie

A Walking Tour of the Ghost Town

LATE AFTERNOON LIGHT FILTERED IN as the air chilled. Even in summer, the Bodie basin is cooler than other Eastside spots at similarly high altitudes. In fall, the aspens dotting the hillsides turn sooner than anywhere else. Autumn is a great time to take a walk through California's official ghost town, where aspen leaves are outshone by colorful history and enduring legends.

"It's real," said Jack Shipley, former California state park ranger, of the place that was his "office" and home for more than a decade. Bodie is not reconstructed, or cleaned up. Instead it's left as-is. "In 1912, the store was locked up with stuff in it," Jack explained—the same stuff you see through a wavy glass window today.

Perhaps it's the state of "arrested decay" that imbues so much spirit in Bodie's weathered wooden buildings. That now-yellow lumber, not gold, is how Bodie resident James S. Cain made his fortune. Cain is to thank for the fact that Bodie is intact—he bought the local bank and his family eventually owned all the buildings that were preserved when Bodie became a state historic park in 1962. And Cain's house is the site of the most intriguing ghost story in this ghostly town.

We learned all this just out of the parking lot, having set out on an exploration of Bodie's spirited past via a clockwise loop from the car, starting at the north end of Fuller Street.

Although most of the ghost stories come from the rangers like Jack who've lived here year-round, these keepers of Bodie seemed reluctant to perpetuate the tales.

Jack pondered the term 'ghost town' as we passed Bell's Machine Shop. Bodie in its prime, in the 1870s and 1880s, he said, saw maybe 5,000 deaths and had a much lower murder rate than a city like New York. "Why isn't that a ghost town?" he asked.

We passed Fuller Street and took Union toward the Mendocini house, where Jack whetted our appetite for the paranormal. Upon entering the building for the first time, a ranger was overtaken with the scent of garlic, the steam from boiling water. But no one had been in the house for decades—since Annie Mendocini lived and cooked here.

Jack continued his philosophical line of questioning as we headed east. "What is a ghost? Someone who died here? Or is it the energy of intense experiences?"

If it's the latter, then Bodie certainly is haunted—from climatology to history, this is a beyond-wild place.

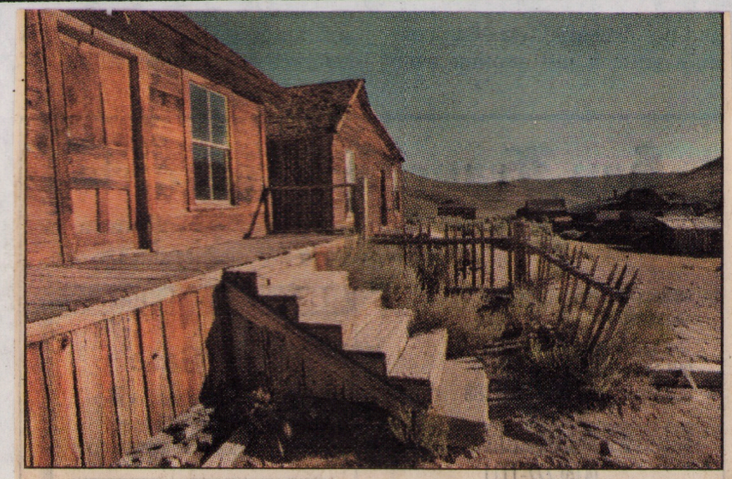
Jack paused a moment as we moved north toward what was Chinatown. No structures remain, a poignant reminder of the less-than-zero status given to Chinese in the US one hundred years ago, especially in western mining towns. For people from a centuries-old, refined culture, this meant hard work in hopes of enough money to be buried with dignity in China. Jack wondered forebodingly about spirits. How many souls were trapped here, unable to return home?

> On a class trip the year before, eighteen different images, from eighteen different cameras of the Cain house window developed blank.

Bodie felt harsh, hiking uphill past the Standard Stamp Mill. But a hop vine growing in front of the the Conway House on Green Street reminded us that there's plenty of life left here. We peered into the windows of the Wheaton & Hollis hotel bar and it felt like happy hour as resident park employees headed back to their quarters for the night.

A first-year made for his room at the Spence Gregory house, trying not to roll his eyes when asked about otherworldly encounters. Jack, however, noted several accounts of an unseen body sitting down at the foot of a bed in that same room, leaving leg and hand impressions on the quilt.

Head Ranger Mark Langner didn't want to talk ghosts either, but let slip that one of his employees was too "creeped out" to sleep in a certain room in the D.V. Cain house further down Green Street.



K.M. CANNON / *Associated Press*

The Cameron House is one of the many buildings in Bodie caught in a state of 'arrested decay' at the ghost town.

6-24-02

Ghost town honorific haunts legislature

Bodie, Calico vie for state designation

By Mark Martin
CHRONICLE SACRAMENTO BUREAU

SACRAMENTO – One is more Disneyland than ghost town, complete with shopkeepers in 1880s costume, re-enacted gunfights and mining tours. The other is desolate and dusty, requiring imagination to recall a time when the once-bustling site was described as "a sea of sin, lashed by the tempests of lust and passion."

Two tiny towns, remnants of the heyday of California's Gold Rush, are now pitted against each other in the state Legislature, much to the chagrin of a Sierra Nevada lawmaker who was only trying to make a few kids happy.

A bill by Assemblyman Tim Leslie, R-Tahoe City, would name Bodie, a remote Mono County area abandoned by miners nearly 100 years ago, as the official state ghost town of California. Leslie wrote the bill after it was suggested to him by junior high school students in his district.

But officials from the Calico Ghost Town tourist attraction in Southern California have taken umbrage and are opposing the bill. Why not Calico, they argue.

Although it's not an issue that has garnered intense lobbying – after all, neither ghost town has many living constituents – Leslie has done interviews with media from as far away as Canada on the bill.

State ghost town?

He's sticking up for his ghost town. And because California has everything from a state soil to a state folk dance, why not a ghost town?

"If you want a snow cone or shooting gallery experience, go to Calico, but if you want a true Scooby Doo experience, you have to go to Bodie," Leslie said.

Founded in 1859 after a gold discovery, Bodie became home to 10,000 miners in the late 1800s, according to state park officials who now manage the site. The area yielded almost $100 million in gold.

The rough-and-tumble town was known throughout the West as a bawdy and dangerous place, averaging one death by gunfire per day.

65 saloons, 2 churches

"There were 65 saloons and two churches," noted Rebecca Scott, a California state parks employee who works at Bodie.

In San Bernardino County, the town of Calico also grew up during the Gold Rush, although it's specialty was silver. Nearly 50 mines produced $21 million worth of silver during the town's peak from 1881 to 1906, said Don Tucker, a spokesman for the town, which is now owned by the county.

Wyatt Earp mined for silver there, and the U.S. Postal Service's only mail-carrying dog made a daily 1-mile trip from the town center to the mines, Tucker said.

Although both towns flourished at roughly the same time, today they couldn't be more different.

Isolated Bodie, 13 miles from U.S. Highway 395 and northeast of Mammoth, consists of 170 buildings suspended in "arrested decay," as the state parks Web site says. Miles from civilization and a paved road, rusty mining equipment remains on the street, looking like miners simply decided one day to abandon the place, according to Leslie.

"It's eerie," he said.

Calico, 3 miles off Interstate 15 and not far from Barstow, features rebuilt buildings, train rides and restaurants. They even host Civil War re-enactments every President's Day, although officials acknowledge Calico was hardly a major battle site in the war.

'Poetic license' at Calico

"We take a little poetic license," Tucker admitted.

Bodie attracts amateur photographers and history buffs; Calico draws as many as half a million visitors a year, including 300,000 foreign tourists, Tucker boasts.

Leslie argues that Bodie is an authentic ghost town – nothing is rebuilt or re-enacted, and there are no RV hookups in sight.

However, Tucker said, Calico is a living ghost town, full of educational presentations to teach visitors about the wild days of the Gold Rush. He and other county officials say they'd like Calico to be considered a candidate for official California ghost town before the Legislature and governor make a final decision.

So far, the bill has sailed through the Legislature, passing through the Assembly with only four no votes. It is expected to be considered by the Senate today. If passed, the measure goes to Gov. Gray Davis' desk.

At least one Southern California lawmaker says he'll stick up for Calico.

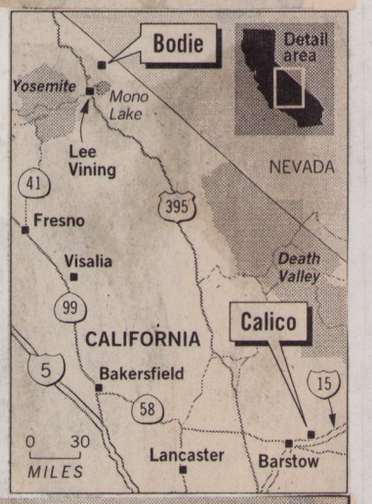
"I represent San Bernardino County. I've been to Calico, and I haven't been to the other place, so I'm going with what I know," said Sen. Jim Brulte, R-Rancho Cucamonga. There is no bill to name Calico the official state ghost town, however, and Brulte said he had bigger problems to worry about – like plugging a $23.6 billion hole in the state budget.

Leslie said he had no idea he would offend other ghost towns with his bill and hopes it won't become a Senate battle pitting Northern California and Southern California lawmakers. The North is outnumbered, he said.

Students testify

The students from Lee Vining Junior High, which is about 30 miles from Bodie, testified in a committee hearing on the measure, saying it might bring more tourists to their tiny part of the world.

"Lee Vining is just a little dot on the map," Leslie said. "This is important to them, and I hope I can deliver."



K.M. CANNON / *Associated Press*

The ruins of the Swazey Hotel at Bodie give few hints to the once-bustling life in the mining town described as "a sea of sin."

Ghost town debate ends in a draw

Assembly compromise gives dual titles to rugged Bodie, tourist mecca Calico

8-21-2002

By Greg Lucas
SACRAMENTO BUREAU CHIEF

SACRAMENTO — In a deal not quite on a par with the Missouri Compromise, the feud between two ghost towns over which would win the coveted designation of California's *official* ghost town was settled Tuesday.

There were no injuries.

Both towns came out winners as senators took time out of the hectic final two weeks of the legislative session to solve the dilemma the old-fashioned way — by striking a bargain.

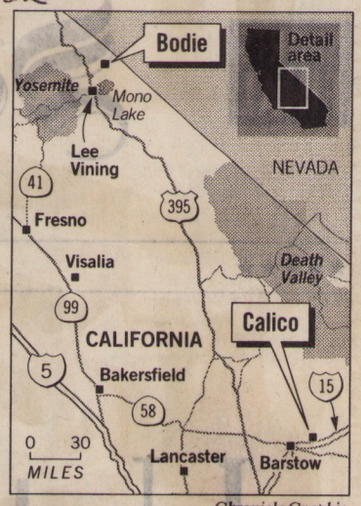
It was the "Great Ghost Town Compromise of 2002," as Sen. Debra Bowen, D-Marina del Rey (Los Angeles County), called it.

Playing the role Daniel Webster played in 1850, Bowen resurrected a bill that sought to confer the title of official California Ghost Town on Bodie, a once-bustling Mono County town now in ruins. The idea was suggested by students from Lee Vining Junior High School, about 30 miles from Bodie.

That bill was killed in June because some Southern California lawmakers thought Bodie's gain would be a loss for Calico in San Bernardino County, a former silver mining town near Barstow turned tourist attraction with train rides and restaurants.

But like vampires, bills often have to be killed several times before becoming dead. That gave Bodie another chance.

Under Bowen's compromise, Bodie will become the state's official Gold Rush ghost town. Bowen said a bill would be introduced next year to make Calico the state's official Silver Rush ghost town.



Chronicle Graphic

"I guess I'm satisfied, but I'd rather not have the amendment," said Assemblyman Tim Leslie, R-Tahoe City. "Bodie was a Gold Rush town, but the last person to leave Bodie was in 1940, considerably after the Gold Rush."

Once described as a "sea of sin, lashed by the tempests of lust and passion," Bodie in its prime boasted 65 saloons and two churches and was home to 10,000 miners after gold was found there in 1859.

Now part of the state park system, the town's 170 buildings are kept in a state of "arrested decay." Roofs, foundations and windows are repaired, but the state tries to leave the buildings' exteriors alone.

Leading the charge against Bodie was Assemblywoman Gloria Romero, D-Los Angeles, who grew up in Barstow.

As a little girl, Romero often visited Calico, which she credits with giving her a sense of California history.

Calico couldn't be more unlike broken-down Bodie. Its buildings are rebuilt, for starters. Try finding an RV hookup in Bodie.

"It's not a legitimate ghost town," Leslie sniffed.

Romero said she is satisfied with the Great Ghost Town Compromise and hopes it offers the students who dreamed up the bill a valuable lesson.

> *"You have to work with people who oppose you to be successful."*
>
> ASSEMBLYMAN TIM LESLIE
> *R-Tahoe City*

"The message to these students is you don't always get what you want in the legislative process, but you can still come up with something that serves a good purpose," Romero said.

Or as Leslie puts it: "You have to work with people who oppose you to be successful."

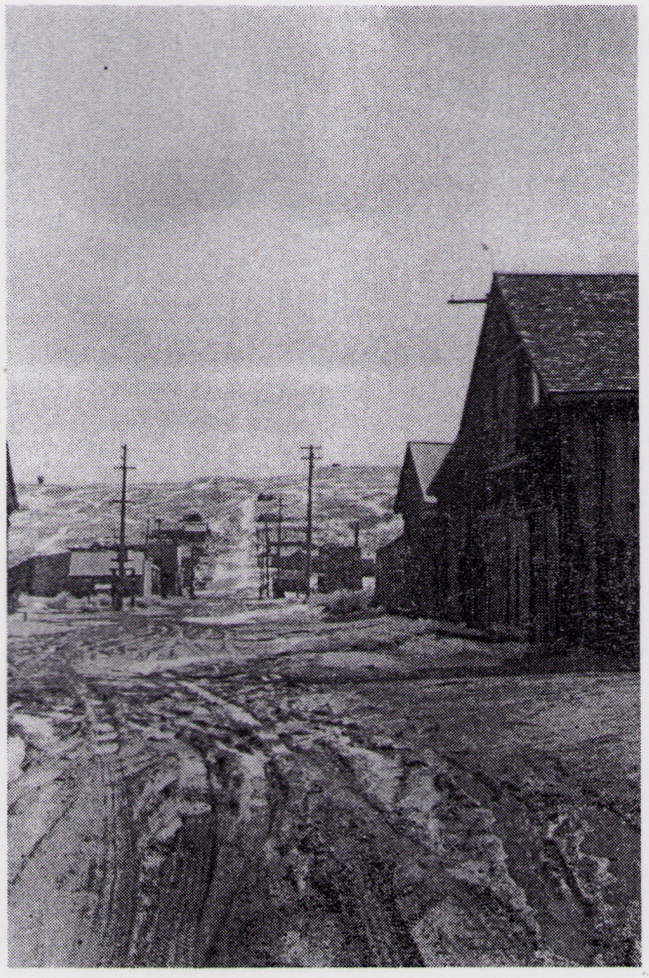
Although Gov. Gray Davis has yet to take a position on the Bodie bill, he is expected to sign it after a final vote in the Assembly sends it to him.

Bodie will join a long list of official state items.

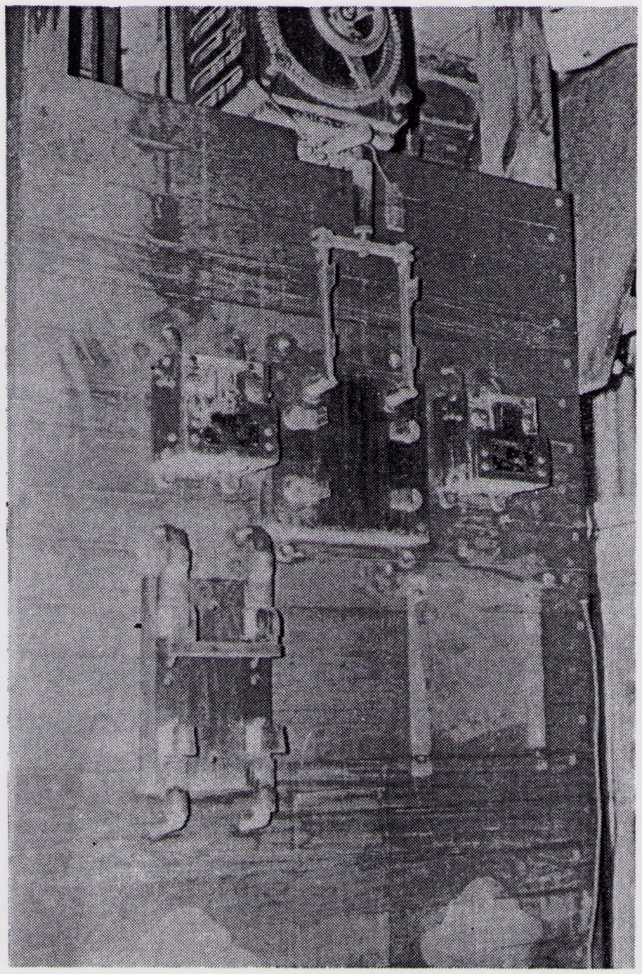
Last year, Davis created an official state tartan modeled on the one used by John Muir's family.

There is already an official state animal, marine mammal, marine fish, bird, reptile, insect, theater, fossil, dance, gemstone, song and dirt — to name just a few.

"There are so many official state something-or-others, it can almost be its own trivia game," said Assemblyman Bill Leonard, R-San Bernardino.



Green Street, Bodie, showing power poles and tree-less hills.



Original control panels inside Standard Mill. Shipped to Bodie in two pieces.

Bodie Electrifies the World

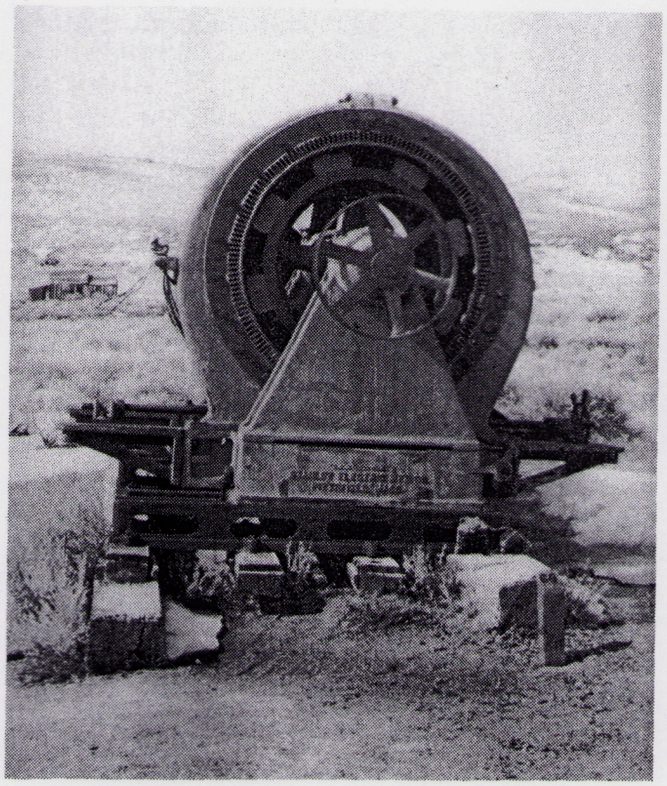
by Barbara Moore

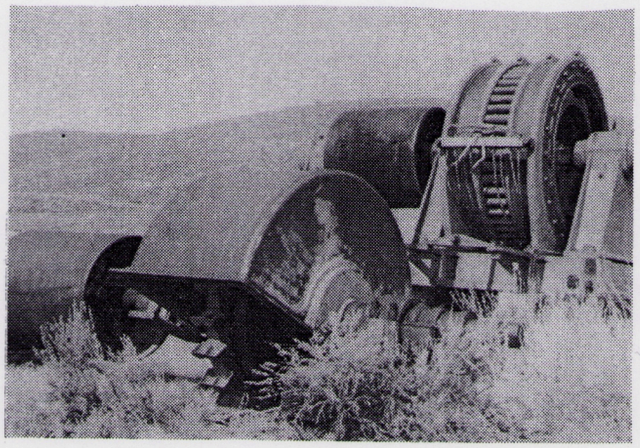
What visitor to the ghost town of Bodie doesn't peek into the houses and exclaim in wonder, "they had electricity!" That is, if the visitor is over fifty. Younger people take electric lights, refrigerators, heat, wall switches and electric plugs in stride. Few realize the use of electricity in homes is a relatively recent invention, and reaching for that convenient switch wasn't always the case.

The over-fifty group can remember the frantic efforts of government during the 1930s when, under the name of Rural Electrification Administration, poles were set and wires strung all across the country to electrify America. Although this was a rural movement to replace windmills and waterwheels as sources of energy, even tremendous numbers of homes in cities hadn't been wired up at the time. Today, in some turn-of-the-century relics, gas fixtures are still evident, giving us a mirror into the almost forgotten past.

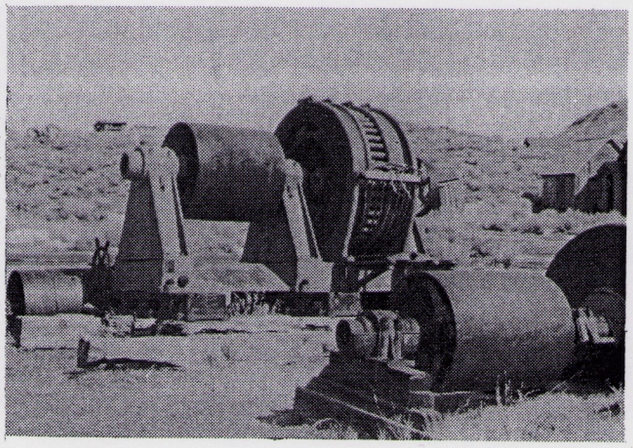
But Bodie? A town that died in the '30s had electricity? A town that was almost as far off the beaten path as you can get? That seems incredulous! But it is true. Bodie not only had electricity, it was the first place in the whole world to use power brought in over long-distance lines.

The reasons are two-fold. One, a far-sighted man. The other, Bodie's monumental need for wood, not only to build and heat houses, but just as important, to produce the steam that





Upper left: Original generatar, thought to have been hauled from the Green Creek dynamo plant (in meadow display).
Lower left: Standard Mill building.
Above: Water powered generator in background. Pelton water wheel in foreground (in meadow display).
Below: Pelton water wheel with water powered generator used prior to electrification (in meadow display).
Opposite: Steam boilers used before electrification (in meadow display). Methodist Church background.



powered the monstrous milling machinery. The Standard Mill alone used over 45 cords of wood a day at a cost of over $1500 per month.

Total wood consumption in Bodie was close to 5,000,000 board feet of lumber per year. Because the surrounding treeless hills provided nothing but scraggly sage brush, hauling the wood from distant Jeffrey pine and pinyon forests contributed substantially to the staggering costs. Wood cutting and hauling made many men wealthier than the stockholders of the mines and eventually led to the building of a railroad with the sole purpose of shipping wood to Bodie.

James Cain, a major stockholder of the Standard Mine at that time, was foresighted, innovative and persuasive, never afraid to experiment against odds and criticism. With its mines declining in production and the population doing likewise, going from a meteoric rise in one year from 3500 to 10,000 in 1880, and dropping to less than 1500 in 1887, Bodie needed some adrenalin to survive. James Cain provided it with two projects, both of which influenced the entire world and postponed Bodie's demise for several years.

One, in 1894, was the perfection of the cyanide process discovered a few years earlier in Australia. Cain, with associates, bought nearly all the tailings in and around Bodie and was able to prove there was money to be made by re-working the thousands of tons of ore in the waste dumps. The cyanide process revitalized Bodie for another ten years and is still an important part of the gold mining process.

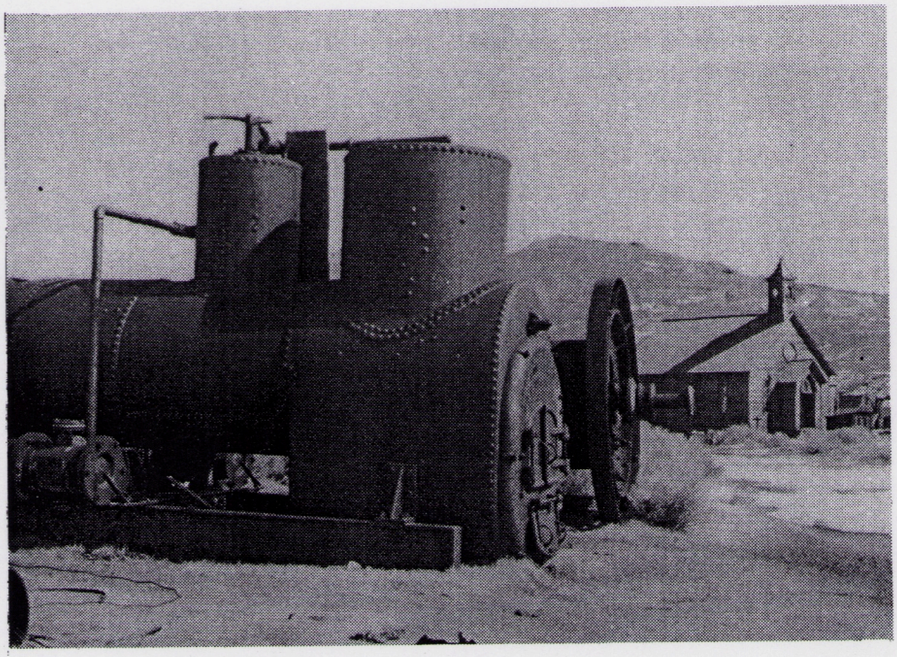
However, two years earlier in 1892, the men in Bodie pioneered an event which would revolutionize the way the people of the world lived and worked, immortalizing Bodie in the annals of history.

The superintendent of the Standard Consolidated Mining Company, Thomas H. Legett*, was quite certain that power could be transmitted over wires and used many miles from its source. Reluctant stockholders had to be convinced that this revolutionary idea was possible, but one early believer was none other than James Cain, the largest stockholder of the mining company.

Doubters dubbed the experiment as Legett's and Cain's folly, since the long-distance transmittal of power had never been tried before. Up to this time hydroelectric power was used only at its source. So little was known about transporting electricity that the engineers were instructed not to have any curves or angles in the line for fear the electricity would jump off and disappear into space if the line wasn't straight.

Construction began in the spring of 1892 at Green Creek, eight miles south of Bridgeport, and thirteen miles from Bodie. The creek was dammed to create a sufficient head of water. The water, dropping 350 vertical feet from Green Creek, went into four twenty-one inch Pelton waterwheels which produced a total of 250 horsepower. This was connected to a Westinghouse alternating dynamo that generated current at 3500 volts.

Later it was determined that the capacity of the original equipment was inadequate, and a new generating plant was built at Green Creek that produced 350 horsepower and 6600 volts of current in three phases. The three-wire alternating current replaced the old direct current two-wire line.



During the construction of the power plant mill operations ceased while it was equipped with agitators, motors, and generators to enable the changeover from steam to electric power. This brought howls of protest from stockholders who objected to the expense, not only of the machinery, but the need for the mill to be shut down.

After many delays caused by accidents and slow delivery of machinery, at 12 noon in October, 1893 the switches were thrown, and slowly the lights came on. The wheels of the small motors began to turn, then the larger ones hummed a steady tune. Power had arrived!

The laughter of ridicule turned to laughter of praise. The $30,000 cost of building the power plant was made up in less than two years as wood costs shrank to nothing. The men who engineered the project were hosted the world over. Legett and his men were eventually employed by the British government and built power plants from Rhodesia to Australia.

Cain started buying land along the Eastern Sierra where he was certain power plants could be built—Lundy Canyon, Lee Vining Canyon, and at Rush Creek near Silver Lake where power plants built shortly after the turn of the century are now part of the Southern California Edison grid system that furnishes power all the way to the Mexican border.

But what about Bodie. The Green Creek development produced only enough power for the mill and a few select businesses in the town. Power for homes was still a few years into the future.

In 1910 a second plant was built at Jordon, at the foot of Copper Mountain, using water from Mill Creek in Lundy Canyon with a 1500' fall to the power house below. Christmas in 1910 was a jolly day when the lights came on in Bodie. Sadly, they didn't stay on long. A massive avalanche thundered down Copper Mountain in March 1911, wiping out the Jordon plant, killing seven persons, and knocking out power in Bodie.

The Jordon plant was rebuilt in a more protected area and the other sites that Cain bought—Lee Vining and Rush Creek—were sold to the Pacific Electric Power Company, the predecessor of Southern California Edison Company.

The rush to produce this new marvel caused stock of the Pacific Electric Power Company to skyrocket from $4.00 per share to $125.00 in just a few years, making James Cain a very wealthy man.

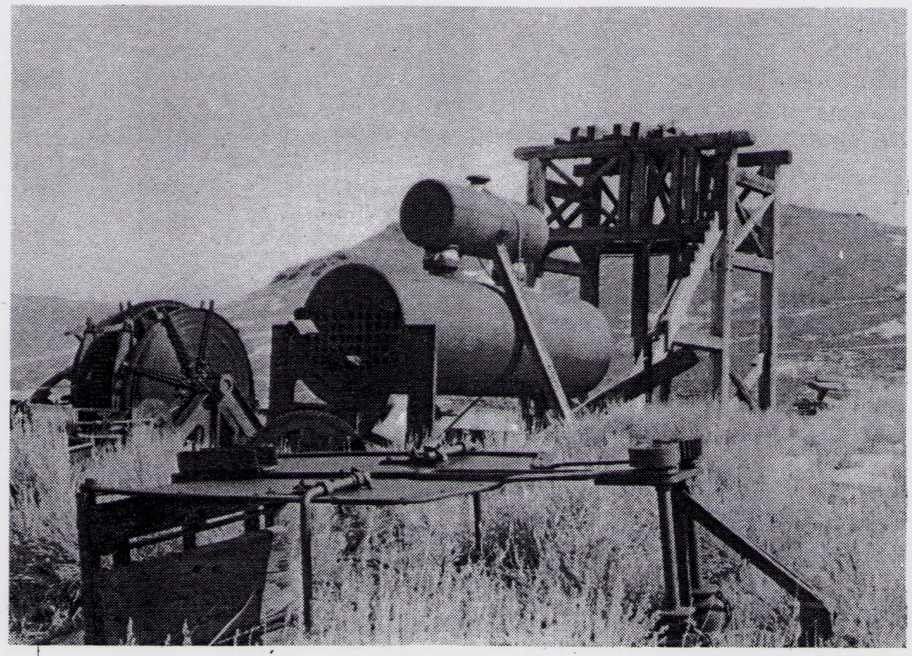
More important than the money he made with his uncanny foresight was the knowledge that his courage changed the lives of people throughout the world, and elevated his beloved town of Bodie to a special niche in history.

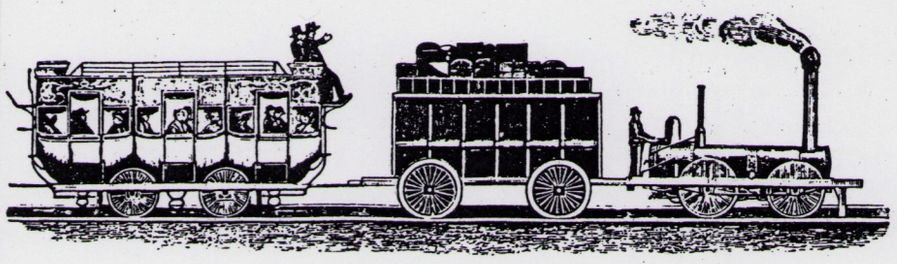
**Spelled Leggett in some sources.*

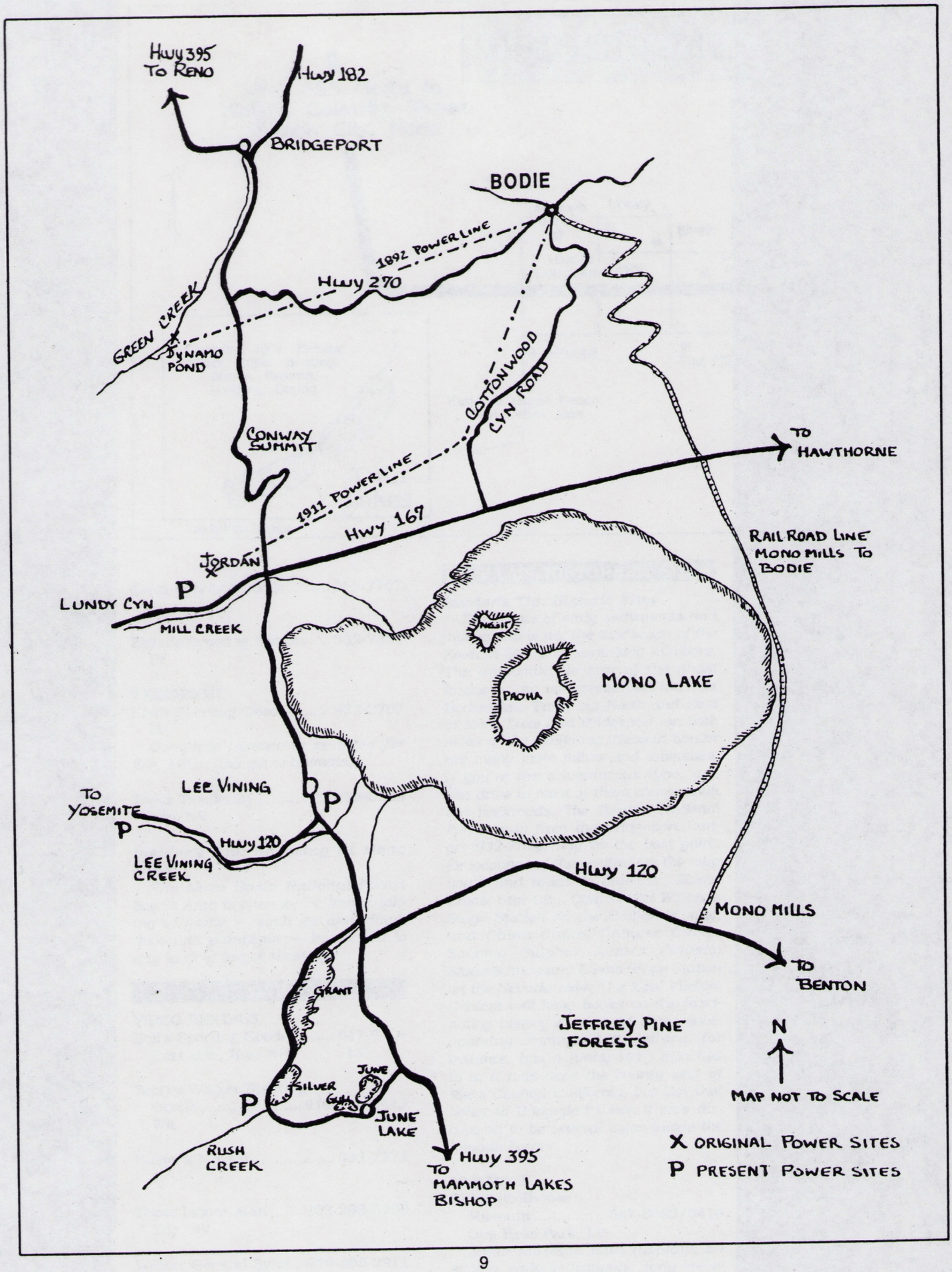
Author's Note:

What is particularly interesting about this is that I am building a house 5 miles from Bodie and will have to generate my own power using solar cells, batteries, and generators. Except for the advanced technology I might as well be back in the days prior to 1892.

The Ghost Town of Bodie, California State Park – Russ & Anne Johnson
Mining Camp Days – Billeb
The Story of Bodie – Ella M. Cain
Bodie 1859-1900 – Frank S. Werdetz
The Story of Early Mono County – Ella M. Cain
Brad Sturdivant, Bodie State Park Ranger






Hwy 395
To Reno
Hwy 182
BRIDGEPORT
BODIE
1892 Power Line
Hwy 270
Green Creek
Dynamo Pond
Cottonwood Cyn Road
Conway Summit
To Hawthorne
1911 Power Line
Hwy 167
Jordan
Lundy Cyn
Mill Creek
Rail Road Line Mono Mills To Bodie
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Paoha
Mono Lake
Lee Vining
To Yosemite
Hwy 120
Lee Vining Creek
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June
Silver
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BODIE GHOST TOWN

If you'd like to see the most well-preserved and largest authentic ghost town in the country, perhaps the world, you've come to the right place.

Bodie was a gold boomtown that grew to more than 10,000 residents by 1881. By 1935, though, the town was almost totally deserted.

During the intervening years, Bodie came to personify the rowdy spirit of the West. It was notorious as the home of the wickedest badmen in the West and "the worst climate out of doors." Shootings were said to frequent -- Bodie was the real-life counterpart to all the troubled towns seen in TV westerns -- and the all-too-common sound of the fire bell rang through the town, tolling the ages of those being buried.

Even today a visit to the town cemetery tells the visitor something about the true nature of Bodie. A surprising number of the graves are of children under 3 years and young men in their teens and twenties. The first, perhaps, demonstrates what effect the harsh conditions of the Early West had on families, the second shows that it was easy to get into a deadly fight. People said the town "had its man for breakfast" almost every day.

Stage holdups, street fights and robberies were said to be an important feature of the public entertainment. 65 saloons helped the miners relax after a hard day of digging, and perhaps contributed to the bad judgement that led to the incidence of such entertainment.

One little girl, whose family was moving to the remote and infamous town, wrote in her diary, "Goodbye God, I'm going to Bodie." A wit at a Bodie newspaper claimed that the child had been misquoted, and that what she actually wrote was "Good, by God! I'm going to Bodie!"

Over the years area gold was mined out and a gradual exodus began from Bodie. Without the shiny metal to lure and hold residents to the area, the harsh environment and isolation took its toll. Fires twice destroyed large parts of Bodie, and the remainder today is only a fraction of the original large town.

In 1962 Bodie became a State Historic Park to protect the remaining buildings as they are, making Bodie the most well-preserved historic gold-mining ghost town in the world.

A self-guided tour brochure is available in the park (or by mail) to give a brief history of each building. A museum is open in the summer. To preserve the character of the town, no commercial facilities are available. Certain parts of the town are closed for safety reasons, and souvenir collecting of even the smallest historic fragment is absolutely forbidden.

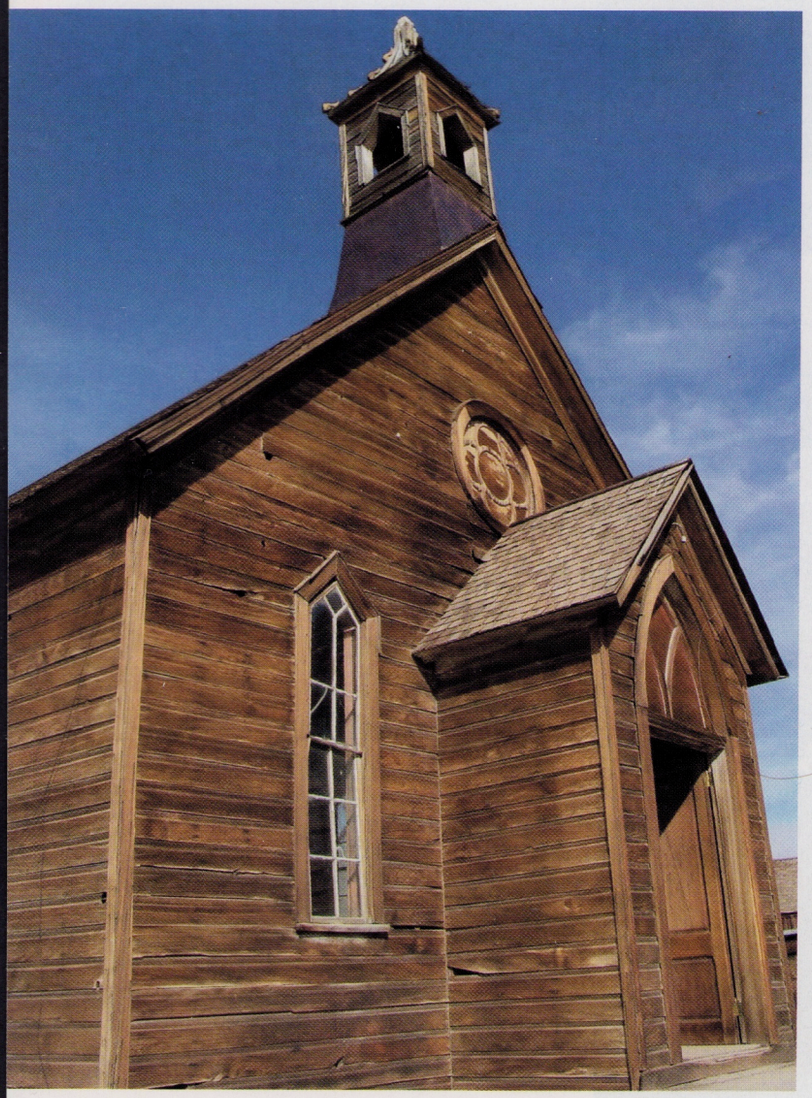
The Bodie Museum is open every day in summer, 10 am to 5:30 pm. Day use fee at Bodie is $5.00, and for an extra dollar visitors can get a self-guided history tour brochure giving the history of each numbered building in Bodie. Bodie Mill tours and history talks happen at intervals -- visitors will need to call ahead to get the schedule and availability. It's important to know that Bodie has no visitor amenities beyond restrooms -- visitors must bring all their own food, drink, camera film and batteries, etc.

Bodie is open all winter, but the road may close with snowfall, requiring ski gear to get to the park. For more information, contact Bodie State Historic Park, PO Box 515, Bridgeport, CA 93517. 647-6445.

PIONEER SPIRIT

BODIE, LAST REAL GHOST TOWN IN THE WEST!

BY SUZANNE NOTTINGHAM



PHOTOS © CAT CONNOR

On a recent trip to Bodie, a young boy asked his mother, "Are ghosts real?" After all, the state highway sign on U.S. 395, five miles south of Bridgeport simply states "Bodie Ghost Town 13 Miles" so they must be. No immediate answer came from the boy's mother.

Turning onto that road, visitors drive along a paved section eventually giving way to the bumpy, original dirt road, which linked Bodie to the outside world during its heyday in the late 1800s.

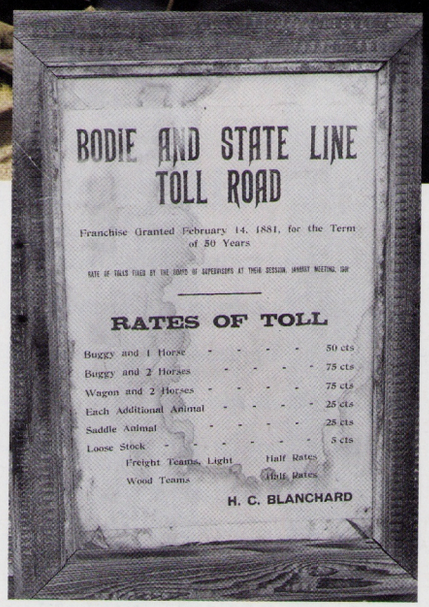
The first gold rush in the East Sierra was in 1857 at what is known as Dogtown, near the entrance to Bodie Road. Be undaunted by the rough ride, because the wear and tear on the car is worth this tangible piece of the Old West. After the last rise in the road, mountains give way to a silent, ominously still valley. Hard to imagine how industrious and busy this valley once was with a population of over 10,000. But the skeletons of the miners' rugged lifestyles remain ingrained into many buildings, which stand as a testament to our heritage as a mining metropolis back in the day.

It's common to imagine Bodie as a movie set. In reality, Bodie is exactly what movie producers strive to accomplish to depict a gritty mining town. Unlike other 'ghost towns,' Bodie hasn't been turned into a tourist attraction. In 1962, Bodie was recognized by the Department of Interior (Park Service) as one of the last untouched gold rush boom towns and deemed to remain in a "state of arrested decay." It became Bodie State Historic Park where preservation is a solid component of the Park Service's dedication to preserve history and wild places. Its structures remain well preserved, as if one day everyone just...left.

As one starts to meander throughout the grid of criss-crossing streets that now stand as a symbol that represents so many other 19th century townships, a stark reality sets in. It's the cemetery, an oxymoron of our 21st century experience that makes Bodie come to life.

There's the old Methodist Church on Green Street, the only house of worship still standing. The prominent Victorian style of architecture captures the imagination of us mortals. How could people get through doorways that short? How did the woman of the home survive in that kitchen? Wonder how many had back pain? The springs in those beds look horrific!

But it's the lure of the dozens of saloons and dance halls that brings us back to the reality of these hard driving times. Saloons and brothels represented a large percentage of revenue for the town, and sometimes the only means of 'entertainment.' In fact, some of the whores made more money, or as much, as the miners who struck it rich. Many prostitutes took their money



Modern transportation, horse-drawn stage lines and the rail system, linked Bodie to the rest of the West.

to large cities like Sacramento and became successful business owners (of a more acceptable kind).

Only those tough enough to handle the lifestyle of working in the worst conditions, gambling, drinking and prostitution, stayed. In a time of vigilantes, hangings, and a general sense of chaos, one can only imagine with eyes wide open what this lawless life could have been like.

The Bodie to Benton Railway extended from Bodie 31 miles around Mono Lake to Mono Mills and was considered innovative, a marvel in its day. A series of switchbacks that carried the trains up and down the steep inclines of Bodie Bluff, are still visible.

The Standard Mine and Mill, the source of Bodie's gold rush, produced $15 million over 25 years. In the year 1860, Bodie and San Francisco were used in the same sentence in terms of potential growth. So what happened?

Bad winters, disease, bad business decisions, a mining trade that had all but dried up, and the industrial revolution forced its residents to leave and look for homesteads once again. What they left behind is a magnificent monument that exemplifies the passion of those men, women and children who forged the west in wagons, buggies and the rail to create a better life.

Bodie was raw and wild. Once a boomtown, then a ghost town, and now a romance, it's a present to us all. Wrapped in its beloved foothills and ribboned with a Park Service budget, those who venture into this Old West history book will grasp the richness and life Bodie represents.

The boy's mother replied, "These tombstones hold the names of real people who built all these structures with their bare hands. History is real, son. Let's just pretend as we tour these streets that ghosts are real, too."

Bodie State Historic Park is open every day from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. The museum opens at 9 a.m. and closes at 6 p.m. Call ahead for information 760-647-6445. Plan to pay an entrance fee. Bring food and water because the closest services are 14 miles away. ◆

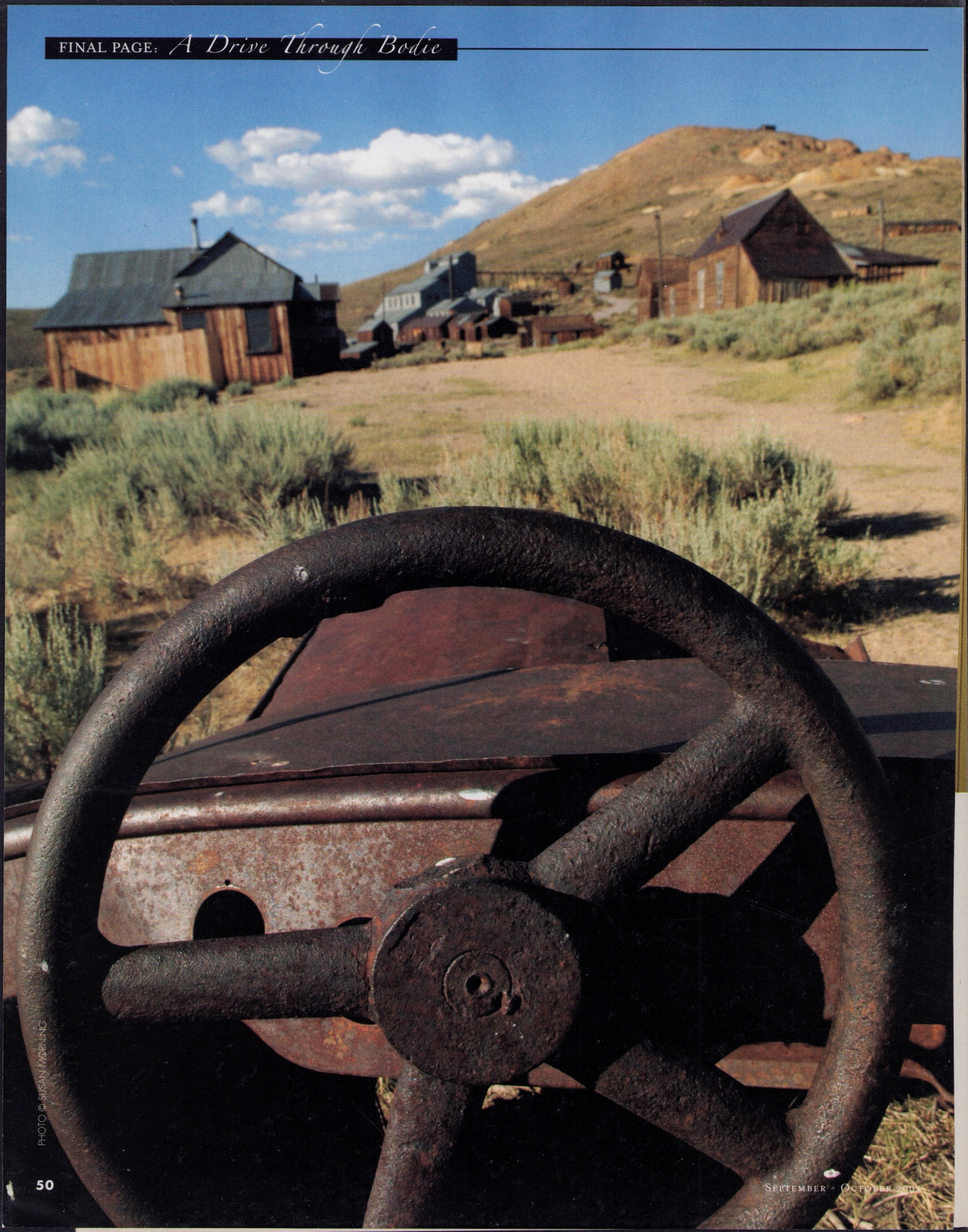


PHOTO © SUSAN MORNING

Bodie

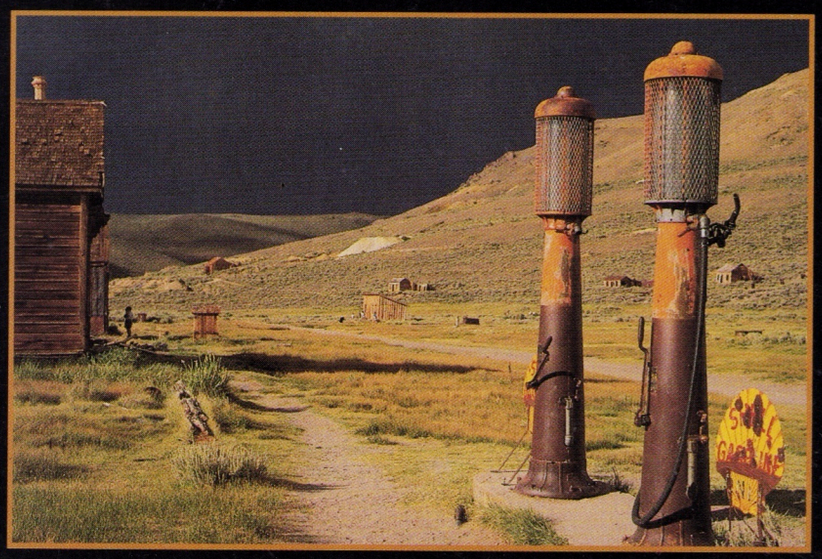
Even a ghost needs friends

BY LORA J. FINNEGAN

In the 1879 schoolhouse, the last day's lesson remains chalked on the board. In the Sam Leon Bar, a player piano stands ready to crank out the next request.

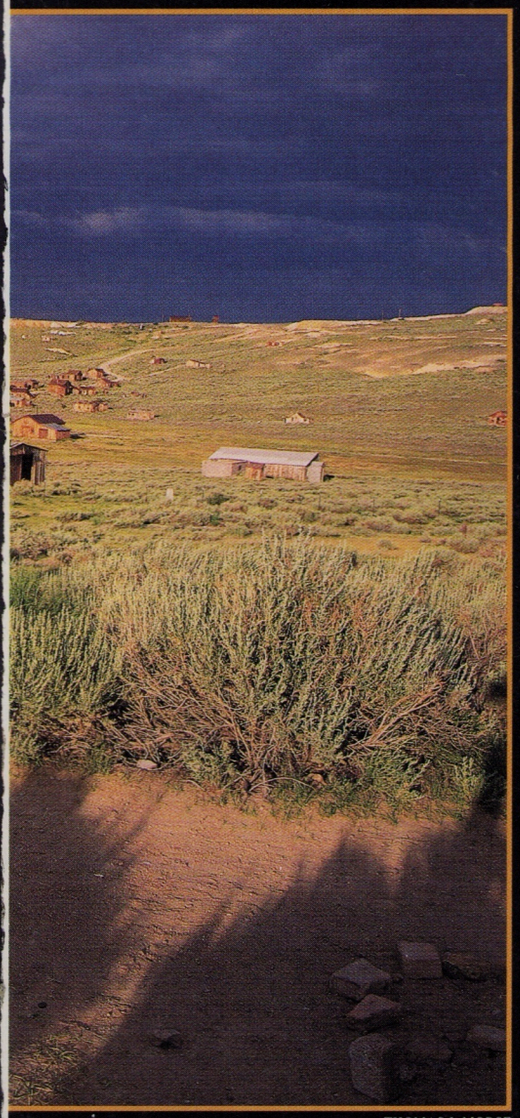
At 8,375 feet in the loneliest part of California's Eastern Sierra, the gold rush town of Bodie has been well preserved, due in part to the town's isolation and the dry air at this elevation. But those aren't the only reasons that so much of this remarkable place remains intact. For a ghost, Bodie has an impressive array of friends.

WEEPING ANGEL *marks a girl's grave in cemetery on outskirts of Bodie. The town huddles beneath a gold-bearing ridge. Below, rusting gas pumps stand guard outside the Boone Store and Warehouse, on Main Street.*



funnels workshop funds into a nonprofit group called Friends of Bodie. "This is our heritage," Morse says. "Someday these photographs may be all we have left of this ghost town. But we hope that these images may in fact be the vehicle to preserve it."

The attention given to this scrappy mining town is more than William S. Bodey could ever have imagined. Bodey was the hapless prospector who struck gold here shortly before his death, in 1859. The gold camp that sprang up took the miner's name but altered the spelling. By the 1880s, the town had attracted about 7,000 residents and gained a notorious reputation. Wild times were had at Bodie's own racetrack and red-light district; gambling palaces and saloons outnumbered churches by about 65 to 2.



THOMAS I. MORSE

ALICE ROBERTSON

STURDY *Lottie Johl House was once Bodie's post office.*

LONE LANTERN *hangs near table set for breakfast in the Tom Miller house.*

The area's mines disgorged some $34 million (in 1880s dollars) worth of gold and silver. Then the ore began to play out, and the human exodus began. By World War I, only about 100 residents remained, and by the 1940s, Bodie had become a ghostly shadow of its former self.

HOW A GHOST TOWN WAS SAVED

Early on, Bodie was protected from one of the major threats facing any ghost town: vandalism. In the 1940s, the Cain family, which owned much of the town, hired caretakers to keep out vandals and maintain the buildings. When California made Bodie a state historic park (in 1962), more than 170 structures remained.

Today, Bodie is a ghost town

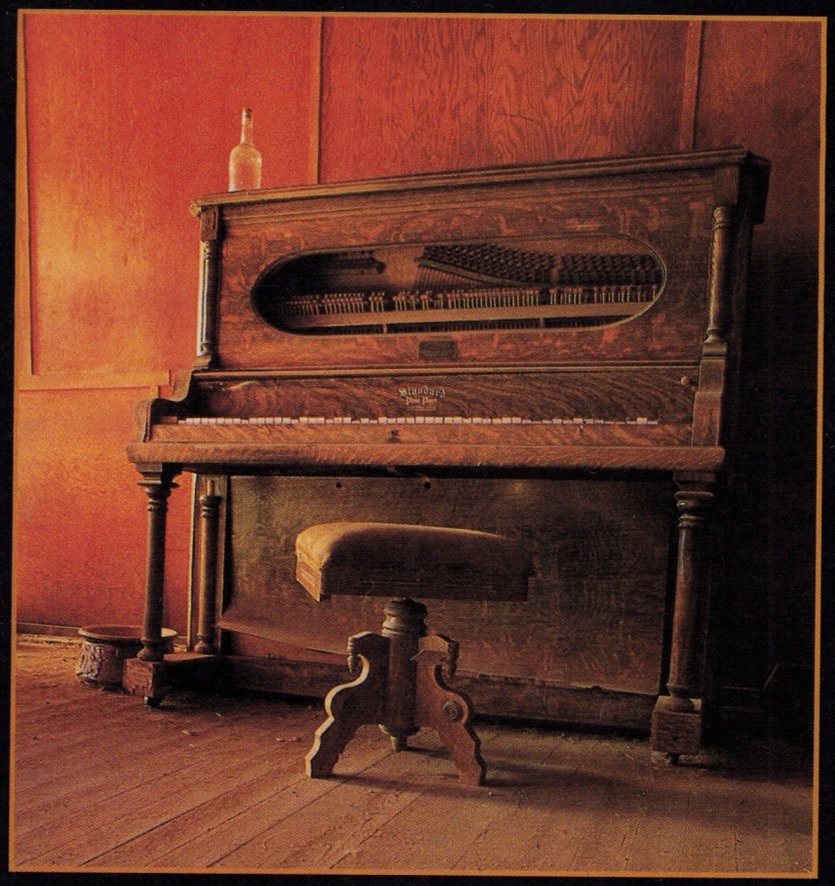
with residents—the park's staff lives here year-round. Each ranger lives in an 1880s house. The interiors have been somewhat modernized, but exteriors were left unchanged; only portions of the rangers' homes have insulation. "The house gets pretty cold in winter. It reminds me how hard life was in the early days," says ranger Mark Pupich.

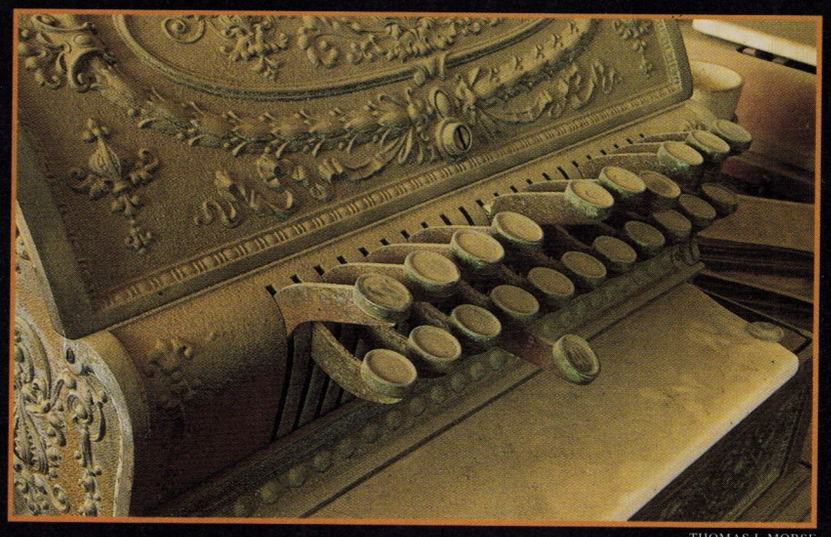
The park's four full-time employees spend much of their time fighting another enemy of every ghost town: the decay caused by time and the elements. The park's goal is not to restore the structures, but to keep them in a state of arrested decay ($75,000 a year is spent just stabilizing the buildings).

The buildings contain a fascinating collection of period artifacts—from a roulette wheel in an old casino to two hose carts in the firehouse. "Every artifact here was original to the site. Some things had been rearranged by early park rangers. But since the late '60s, nothing has been touched," says Pupich.

The Friends of Bodie was created to help preserve Bodie and fund interpretive programs; you can join the volunteer group ($15 membership) by writing to Box 515, Bridgeport, Calif. 93517.

Ironically, this historic mine town may be threatened if a modern gold-mining scheme, which has been proposed nearby, begins operation: the rumble of heavy equipment and blasting could shake Bodie's fragile structures. In response, two groups have sprung up to fight against such new mining: Save Bodie! Committee, (916) 558-3734, or (800) 994-2530 in California; and Eastern Sierra Citizens for the Protection of Bodie, (619) 934-4916. Congress is now considering a bill called The Bodie Protection Act of 1993, which would exempt from new mining claims some 6,000 acres of federal lands surrounding the town.





THOMAS I. MORSE

ABANDONED PIANO *in Sam Leon Bar (top) and cash register are silent reminders of livelier days.*

To learn how to capture the beauty of Bodie on film, you can join a photography workshop. Morse's 4½-day workshops cost $465; call Global Preservation Projects at (805) 682-3398. Two other photographers offer three-day workshops ($170 to $195): call Clinton Smith at (800) 674-8444, ext. 2174; or Bob Cumming at (714) 531-2698. Or join three-day workshops in Bodie and surrounding areas: call Ballenger/Tulley at (818) 954-0933.

If you're on U.S. Highway 395 7 miles south of Bridgeport, take the 13-mile detour to Bodie. The park is open daily year-round, from 9 to 7 in the summer; entry fee is $5 per vehicle. To check weather, call the park at (619) 647-6445.

While Bodie seems to be growing old gracefully, other Western ghost towns face extinction, often at the hands of vandals and souvenir hunters. Anyone who cares about fading ghost towns might learn a lesson from Bodie's friends. ■

March, 2009

The Bad Man from Bodie: A Frontier Legend Rediscovered

By
Michael H. Piatt

Bodie is a ghost town—perhaps the West's best preserved ghost town, where abandoned, weather-beaten buildings stand stoically against encroaching sagebrush. But years ago, the remote mining camp east of the Sierra Nevada Mountains in California became the object of a gold rush that gave rise to one of the West's wildest boomtowns. Saloon brawls, stagecoach robberies, vigilante justice, and spontaneous eruptions of gunfire earned Bodie a reputation for violence that rivaled Tombstone , Deadwood, and Dodge City.[1] Those boomtowns are famous today, recognized largely for celebrated gunmen who stalked their streets. While Wyatt Earp, Doc Holliday, and Wild Bill Hickok became icons of American folklore, Bodie's killers, depraved and otherwise, were quickly forgotten. Still, Bodie's penchant for trouble gave rise to one legendary figure, though his fame was short-lived. [2] Evoking peril and doom, the "Bad Man from Bodie" was a name recognized across the country. The title drew upon "bad man," a popular 19th century expression that meant "ruffian," "tough guy," "gunfighter," or "cold-blooded murderer." [3]

After prospector W.S. Bodey and his companions discovered gold in 1859, the Bodie Mining District (named after Bodey with a slight change in spelling) remained nearly unpopulated until a mine caved, exposing an ore body that inspired San Francisco speculators to finance industrial-scale mining. Their gamble paid off. In late 1877 the mine produced $784,523 in gold and silver bullion and investors received four consecutive monthly dividends. The company's good luck stunned the mining world and infected the nation's investing community with gold fever that aroused fortune hunters who headed for Bodie. As the population swelled past 1,000 restless souls, the mining outpost's startup newspaper summarized the situation.

> Gold — But a few short months ago Bodie was an insignificant little place, now she is rapidly growing in size and importance and people are crowding in upon her from far and near, and why? Because of the rich discoveries of gold — yellow, glittering, precious gold.[4]

Except for a few minor fisticuffs and knife fights, Bodie remained peaceful during the early months of the excitement. But on January 15, 1878, gunfire pierced the wintry air. In the initial moments of the exchange James Blair, age about 28, received a bullet in his left arm near the shoulder, but he continued firing until John

Bresnan, age 30, lay dead. A week later doctors administered chloroform and operated on Blair's arm. They removed the shattered upper portion of his humerus bone, but the patient died 26 days after the street fight.[5] Some twenty miles away in the county courthouse at Bridgeport, the recorder wrote the names Bresnan and Blair on a clean page in the spanking new *Mono County Register of Deaths*, an impressive leather-bound volume adorned with gold lettering.[6] The official record of deadly violence at Bodie had begun.

Boomtown Bodie churned with activity in Spring 1878, when newly discovered bonanzas attracted even more gold seekers, multiplying the camp's population five times over before year's end. Spoofing the distant mining town's rough-and-tumble inhabitants, the *San Francisco Argonaut* published a tall tale by journalist and humorist E.H. Clough. Titled "The Bad Man of Bodie," the story told of Washoe Pete, a "bluffer" known for wild and amusing exaggerations. "He swaggered and boasted to his heart's content," the yarn began. Whenever Pete drew his revolver and shot out the lights, he only evoked onlooker smiles and remarks of "purty fair shootin'."

One day Pete entered a saloon, where he encountered a timid, peaceful mining expert.

"You are an expert, eh?" shouted Bodie's baddest bad man, eyeing the pint-size newcomer menacingly. "You're one o' them fellers as allows he knows payin' mines, are ye? Well, ye're the wust I *ever* saw."

"I don't want to quarrel with you, sir," responded the expert meekly.

"Ye'd better not, young feller, ye'd better not. I'm a whirlwind in a fight, and don't ye forget it."

"I'm a man of peace," cried the well-mannered visitor, cowering from his tormenter. "I carry no weapons, and of course I could not hope to stand before an untamed whirlwind."

Pete leaned over the stranger and shook his fist in the man's face.

"I'm bad; I'm chief in this yer camp, an' I ken lick the man who says I ain't. I'm a ragin' lion o' the plains, an' every time I hit I kill. I've got an arm like a quartz stamp, an' I crush bones when I strike."

"Please don't joke so roughly," pleaded the helpless expert. "Let's take a drink and call it square. I'm very sorry that I have offended you."

"Ye think I'm jokin', do ye?" hollered the bad man. "Ye take me for a josh, eh? I'll show ye what I am afore I git through with ye. Ye don't play me fur no tenderfoot."

By this time a crowd had filled the room; all smiling and enjoying the drama.

"This has gone on 'bout long 'nough," bellowed Bodie's bad man. "Square yerself — I'm goin' ter kick, an' a Comstock mule ain't no match for Washoe Pete — d'ye hear me?"

The bully raised his ponderous boot. But just then the little man straightened himself and his left fist struck Pete between the eyes like a locomotive piston. The blow sent the surprised bully sprawling onto the sawdust-covered floor. The expert pounced on his victim, then drew back and struck again, delivering more blows that fell like thunderbolts. Pete reached for his knife and six-shooter, but the stranger flanked his moves and planted more punches on the braggart's prostrate form.

"Let up!" the tyrant howled. "I was only foolin'—can't yer take a joke, dern ye? I give in, dern ye, I give in!"

The sight was too much for the onlookers, and their laughter echoed through the hills beyond Bodie Bluff.

"All hands to the bar for drinks," the mine expert called out, rising from his victim.

As the jovial crowd gathered for a toast, the "Bad Man of Bodie" crawled away in disgrace.

"I didn't lay out to fall up against batterin' rams," he muttered to himself.[7]

The yarn played upon Bodie's growing reputation for violence. After the *Reno Record* reported that in

December 1878 a man was cut to pieces in Bodie, the *Gold Hill News* queried, "Why can't a man get along in Bodie without fighting?" Bodie's press answered whimsically, blaming the district's 8,500-foot elevation.

> Really, we can't say. It must be the altitude. There is some irresistible power in Bodie which impels us to cut and shoot each other .... The clashing of revolvers up and down Main street can be constantly heard, and . . . a man cannot go to his dinner without getting a bullet hole in his hat, or the seat of his unmentionables cut away by the deadly knife of the desperado. Yes, it is sad, but only too true, that everybody must fight that comes to Bodie.[8]

The *Tybo Sun* added intrigue by reporting, "a Bodie man never has two disputes with the same man. This is explained by the fact that he kills him at the first quarrel." One wit tendered absurdly, "the Bodie man always eats his victim after killing him."[9]

Tall tales of the West that portrayed its inhabitants as unsophisticated, ornery, and dangerous were popular across America. Even the *Boston Daily Globe* amused East Coast readers in July 1879 by describing a brute who staggered into an upscale drinking establishment.

"Everybody come up and have something to drink," demanded the newcomer as he lurched up to the bar.

He gave a furious whoop and smashed a bottle over his head. Then he performed a war dance.

"I'm a bad man," declared the intruder, "and always make it a practice to strew upon the floor the bowels of any person who declines to drink upon my invitation."

Affirming his remarks, he drew an 18-inch "Arkansas toothpick" from the back of his collar, sending patrons stampeding for the exits.

"Who is he?" muttered a terrified spectator, taking cover behind the bar, "From Bodie, I suppose."

"Bodie, hell no!" thundered the bartender. "He's from Boston. He belongs to that Sunday-school excursion."[10]

Americans have long enjoyed playful exaggeration for entertainment's sake, elevating leg pulling to a national art form. The frontier and its heroes were frequent subjects, and amusing fictional characters, such as Paul Bunyan and Pecos Bill, remain popular today. But when the West was wild, Bodie's bad man was an image recognized across the country, based on the remote gold town's perceived disregard for law and order. Even New York's prestigious *Engineering and Mining Journal* departed from printing mining news to disclose with touches of hyperbole and humor that, "Bodie contains about 6,000 inhabitants, who support 156 drinking places, several newspapers, and many attorneys-at-law, without a single church."[11]

Newspaper editors far and wide seemingly took pleasure in embellishing stories of deviltry and attributing them to any passing stranger who could be conveniently labeled a "Bad Man from Bodie." In a San Francisco courtroom, a defendant arrested for "vulgar language" argued that the city's press had unfairly dubbed him the Bad Man from Bodie. "I have been mortified by glaring headlines," complained W.H. Branch. "I am suspected of carrying nitroglycerine in each pocket, of having a large and ugly-shaped knife in each boot, and a brace of pistols in my belt." The accused begged for leniency, arguing that negative reporting had harmed his case. "Yes, your honor," he implored. "Despite the implication, I have never been in Bodie in my life!"[12]

The expression "Bad Man from Bodie" had become nationally recognized by 1880, when the writer who coined the term two years earlier published a second tale that appeared in Sacramento's *Daily Bee*. "Having made a close study of the peculiar class of 'bad men' generally known as Bad Men from Bodie," proclaimed E.H. Clough, "I am prepared to add my plethora of wisdom in this respect to that already extant in the world at the present time." Dropping Washoe Pete from the story, Clough spun a yarn about another improbable character.

> One of the peculiarities of a Bad Man from Bodie is his profanity. A Bad Man from Bodie who never used an oath is as impossible as perpetual motion or an honest election in Nevada. This trait is especially noticeable whenever he kills a man or endeavors to kill one. . . . Meeting an eligible candidate for a place in the graveyard, he emits his stereotyped oath and blazes away.

The columnist claimed to have actually witnessed a Bodie bad man enter a saloon and leap upon a billiard table.

"Here I am again," the make-believe thug roared, "a mile wide and all wool. I weigh a ton and when I walk the earth shakes. Give me room and I'll whip an army. . . . I was born in a powder house and raised in a gun factory. I'm bad from the bottom up and clear grit plumb through."

From atop his improvised podium, the bad man ranted, "I'm chief of Murdertown, and I'm dry! Whose treat is it? Don't all speak at once for I'll turn loose and scatter death and destruction Hell bent for election. Your treat, is it? Well, come up everybody. Pass the old rat poison."

Whenever a Bodie bad man visited another mining camp, according to Clough, the locals would wring their hands and say, "Recon it's goin' to liven up around here; I see the bonebreaker's in town." Meanwhile, the undertaker dusted off his hearse and groomed its black plumes; the coroner engaged a physician to carry out autopsies and convened a jury to hold inquests; the gravedigger purchased another spade; and the stonecutter would order new chisels to epitaph victims in marble.[13]

Clough's wild stories motivated other writers who drew inspiration from the bonanza town's lawless inclination. The *Stockton Mail* joined the fun with a line of clever fiction. "There is even talk in Bodie's upper circles of forming a society to exclude from high-toned gatherings everyone who has not killed his man."[14]

Another far-off columnist spun a tale about an inebriated loudmouth who entered the Fern Leaf concert hall in San Francisco.

"I'm a chip from the side of Bodie Bluff," the stranger yelled as he upset a table and jumped onto the stage, driving a terrified soloist into a corner. "I'm an old stager myself, and capture whole camps with my actin'."

The intruder pulled his gun and fired a shot, extinguishing the footlights and sending musicians and the audience fleeing toward the doors.

"This is what I call fun," proclaimed the bad man. "This old town needs shaking up a little; the boys seem to be sort o' low and need a boom."[15]

Violent stories, both real and fabricated, gave Bodie an air of danger, an aspect of the camp's far-flung fame that delighted some but troubled others. One Bodie editor challenged the motives and accuracy of distant-city reporting.

> When the witty paragrapher of one of our metropolitan contemporaries has touched up all the live topics of the day, and still lacks a little filling of the space in his paper, he dashes off a few lines about the "bad man of Bodie," and his exploits in the way of "cleaning out" a saloon full of city loafers, blowing out lights with his revolver, or other equally improbable performances. In brief, we do not enjoy having our town pointed out either as a murderer's paradise or the chosen headquarters of the Angel of Death, because neither proposition is true. The fact is, the "bad man of Bodie" is as much a myth, and is as unreal as "the baseless fabric of a vision." He does not exist.[16]

The columnist later admitted that killings actually did take place in Bodie, but only among its rowdy citizens.

> As to the occasional homicides which occur here, there never has been yet an instance of the intentional killing of a man [that] was not a verification of the proverb that "He that liveth by the sword shall perish by the sword." As to the health of Bodie, there were about 111 deaths in this place [during 1879], out of a population varying from 5,000 to 8,000 people. A very considerable number of these were killed by accidents in mines.[17]

The *San Francisco Bulletin* summed up the situation: "The Bad Man from Bodie is a sort of a generic term for all the bad men in the State." An offended Bodie newspaperman recoiled at the insult. "Bodie is one of the quietest, most law-abiding mining districts" in both California and Nevada, he bragged, asserting that no one had been convicted of murder there in more than a year and a half. Although factual, his boast concealed a disturbing truth. Twenty or so homicides had been tried in court during that time, without a single guilty verdict. Accused killers consistently won acquittals by merely blaming the deceased for starting the trouble. Mono County juries, the columnist revealed, "have in every instance found the killing was done in self defense."[18]

One Bodie resident visited the Bay Area and tried to improve his town's image by appealing to the *San Francisco Daily Report*. "People living at a distance from our mining district often do us a gross injustice in commenting on our fighting affairs," he complained.

> [They] assume that Bodie is a terribly wicked place. . . . The "Bad Man from Bodie" has become a popular phrase and every time a fatal shooting scrape occurs in the town some paper heads its account with "Another Bodie Fighter Gets His Man For Breakfast."[19]

Also objecting to unflattering reports, a newsman in Bodie remarked, "But Bodie is much misunderstood by those outside. They have met with an occasional 'Bad Man from Bodie,' and have been too ready to judge the entire community from the bad man's standpoint."[20]

While law-abiding citizens sought to change outside opinion, their efforts did little good. Bodie's violent reputation would not subside until years after the boom. The town's population decreased precipitously after mid-1880, then leveled off at around 800; comprised mostly of wage-earning miners and their families.

As the camp matured, its once-famous Bad Man faded into the mists of forgotten folklore,[21] overtaken by a more powerful legendary figure — the cowboy. An article in the New York-based *National Police Gazette* anticipated the popularity of cowboys and compared them to the Bad Man from Bodie.

> The untamed cowboy generally sports a large six shooter, a belt, a knife, repeating rifle, and a huge pair of spurs, while the mustang which he rides is supplied with a Spanish saddle and held in check and guided by a huge Spanish bit. Herding cattle being his vocation, nothing delights him more than a wild chase after an untamed steer, and, being a splendid rider, neither an Apache nor a soldier can get the best of him on the plains. Sometimes he is an American, sometimes a Mexican, a half-breed, or Indian, but no matter what his nationality may be he is as uncivilized as a grizzly bear and reckless as a savage. . . . Quick, wiry, and intrepid, often generous and humane, he [stands apart], and many are the stories told of his bloodthirsty career. . . . He it is who does the shooting in most of our frontier towns, and is fast becoming a terror to the citizens of the region where he chooses to visit. Like "the bad man from Bodie," fear to him is an unknown quantity, and the greater the danger the more desperate he seems to become.[22]

Marking the early stages of America's fascination with cowboys, the nationally read tabloid portrayed troublesome ranch hands as equals to Bodie's hard drinking, reckless mining men. Cowboys, however, gained popularity after Wild West shows, then motion pictures and television, cast them as galloping do-gooders. Based on the entertainment value of fast-shooting buckaroos on horseback, action-packed adventures followed phony story lines and depicted cattle driving as if it were the West's highest calling. Ranching now symbolizes America's frontier past, suggesting that no other occupation—including gold mining—ever existed. As for the once fabled "Bad Man from Bodie," he faded into obscurity, while cowboys now symbolize the nation and the West that wasn't.[23]

For a thoroughly researched, documented account of violence in boomtown Bodie, see: Roger D. McGrath, Gunfighters, Highwaymen & Vigilantes: Violence on the Frontier *(Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1984), 102-271.*

Home Bodie's History About the Book More Essays

NOTES:

[1] Several western towns (five mining towns and one cattle town) boomed almost simultaneously:

Deadwood, DT, 1876; Dodge City , KS , 1876; Leadville , CO , 1878; Bodie , CA , 1878; Butte City , MT , 1880; and Tombstone , AT, 1880.

[2] Bodie's most famous inhabitant, Madame Mustache, was a professional gambler who committed suicide a mile or so south of town in September 1879. Educated, pretty, and fashionably dressed, Eleanor Dumont arrived in Nevada City , California , in 1854 at about age 20 to begin a career of dealing cards and running gambling establishments. Popular among the miners, the petite French Madame Dumont followed gold rushes and silver booms, dealing cards in mining camps for the next quarter century. Nicknamed Madame Mustache in later years because of the dark hair on her upper lip, she arrived at Bodie in May 1878 suffering from middle age, a failed marriage, and a run of bad luck. More than a year later, she pooled her savings with a $300 loan to open faro and twenty-one games in the Magnolia saloon on Main Street , but she went broke after a few hours. Madame Mustache penned a suicide note saying she was tired of life, then followed the road from town, stepped into the sagebrush, and swallowed a lethal dose of morphine. (*Bodie Weekly Standard* (Bodie, CA) 29 May 1878; *Daily Bodie Standard* (Bodie, CA) 8 September 1879; *Bodie Morning News* (Bodie, CA) 9 September 1879; *The National Police Gazette* (New York, NY) 4 October 1879, 10)

[3] "Bad man" was a common Wild West expression before imaginative 20th century writers invented "gunslinger." Recalling his ill repute in Arizona and Colorado , Doc Holliday remarked, "When any of you fellows have been hunted from one end of the country to the other, as I have been, you'll understand what a bad man's reputation is built on." Writing in 1883, an observer recalled Wild Bill Hickok as city marshal of Abilene: "Hickok was a bold, bad man, and had no respect whatever for human life. He could draw a revolver in less time, and fire with surer aim than any other man in the West." Wyatt Earp's 1929 obituary in the *New York Times* headlined, "End Comes to Wyatt Earp at Los Angeles After Life of Battling Bad Men." (*New York Sun* 3 June 1886 in Gary L. Roberts, *Doc Holliday: The Life and Legend* (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2006), 375; A.T. Andreas, History of the State of Kansas (Chicago, IL: A.T. Andreas, 1883), 688 in Joseph G. Rosa, *Wild Bill Hickok: The Man & His Myth* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1996), 152; *New York Times* 14 January 1929, 23). Also see, R.K. DeArment, "Four Awful Bad Men," *Journal of the Wild West History Association* Vol. 1, No. 4 (August 2008): 34-38, 48.

[4] *Bodie Standard* (Bodie , CA) 7 November 1877 .

[5] *Bodie Standard* (Bodie , CA) 23 January; 6 February; 13 February 1878 .

[6] *Register of Death of Mono County* in Maxine Chappell, "Bodie and the Bad Man: Historical Roots of a Legend" (Master's thesis, University of California, 1947), 39-40.

[7] E. H. Clough, "The Bad Man of Bodie," *The Argonaut* (San Francisco , CA) 1 June 1878 , 7; *Bodie Weekly Standard* (Bodie , CA) 28 August 1878 . Born at Sonora , California , in 1854, Edwin H. Clough became a journalist and editor for several Bay Area newspapers including the *Chronicle*, *Call*, and *Evening Post*. He later served on the staffs of the Sacramento *Daily Bee*, Sonora *Union Democrat*, and the Stockton *Independent*. Although an accomplished newsman during the 1870s and 80s, he is best remembered for his satirical short stories, including two about the Bad Man from Bodie. (Herbert O. Lang, *A History of Tuolumne County, California* (San Francisco, CA: B.F. Alley, 1882), 341)

[8] *Weekly Bodie Standard* (Bodie , CA) 25 December 1878 in Chappell 1947, 49-50.

[9] *Weekly Bodie Standard* (Bodie, CA) 5 April 1879.

[10] *Boston Daily Globe* (Boston, MA) 7 July 1879.

[11] *Engineering and Mining Journal* (New York, NY) 31 January 1880, 86.

[12] *San Francisco Daily Stock Report* in *Daily Free Press* (Bodie, CA) 2 June 1880

[13] E.H. Clough, "Bad Men from Bodie," *The Daily Bee* (Sacramento, CA) 12 October 1880, 1.

[14] *Daily Free Press* (Bodie, CA) 22 October 1880.

[15] *Daily Free Press* (Bodie, CA) 6 January 1881.

[16] *Daily Free Press* (Bodie, CA) 7 January 1880.

[17] *Daily Free Press* (Bodie, CA) 7 January 1880.

[18] *Daily Free Press* (Bodie, CA) 10 October 1880; Roger D. McGrath, *Gunfighters, Highwaymen & Vigilantes: Violence on the Frontier* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1984), 256-257.

[19] *Daily Free Press* (Bodie, CA) 17 June 1881.

[20] *Weekly Standard-News* (Bodie, CA) 26 October 1881.

[21] In 1939 veterans of Bodie's gold mining excitement remembered the Bad Man through letters to the *Chronicle* in San Francisco:

"Editor: In your recent editorial . . . you mention the town's leading citizen, the celebrated Bad Man from Bodie. On inquiring about I have found that while everyone has heard of this eminent Californian, no one seems to known who he was. I wonder if any of your readers can tell me who was the great Bad Man and what did he do that was so bad?" William Harrison [*The Chronicle* (San Francisco, CA) 5 October 1939]

"Editor: My boyhood was spent in Bodie. A long time ago my father was sheriff of Mono County, in which Bodie is situated. . . . Bodie was, in its flowering days, known as the wickedest mining camp in the world. It lay there in the Sierra, on the Nevada side, in a desolate, forbidding land, remote from what even then was pleasantly called civilization. Some of the ore from its mines was fabulously rich and the camp's fame attracted lawless men from near and far places. Passions flamed high and quickly on little provocation, and many men died swiftly. It was the deadliest camp in the West. So, its notoriety as a killer camp took form in that phrase, 'A Bad Man from Bodie,' a phrase which literally traveled around the world. The phrase did not apply to any one man, no matter how many notches might be on his gun. It was a general term. Automatically, any boy or man who lived in that camp, whose sagebrush graveyard was populous with men who had died when guns had flashed, became a Bad Man from Bodie. Just living there, just being a resident of that camp that was so deadly, gave to every Bodie man the right to be known as the Bad Man of Bodie. . . . I am quite sure those who made Bodie their home in those long-ago years will agree with me when I say that the title in question was general, instead of being the tag of some one individual, no matter how many men he happened to shoot up before breakfast." Oscar Morgan [*The Chronicle* (San Francisco, CA) 11 October 1939]

"Editor: Mr. Morgan corrects the impression many might have acquired of the actual existence of a 'Bad Man from Bodie.' As a resident of Bodie in '79, I agree with Mr. Morgan. There were bad men in Bodie and bad whisky, and there were lawless killings and mass killings in mine accidents, but the 'Bad Man from Bodie' was a gag." J. Cassidy. [*The Chronicle* (San Francisco, CA) 17 October 1939]

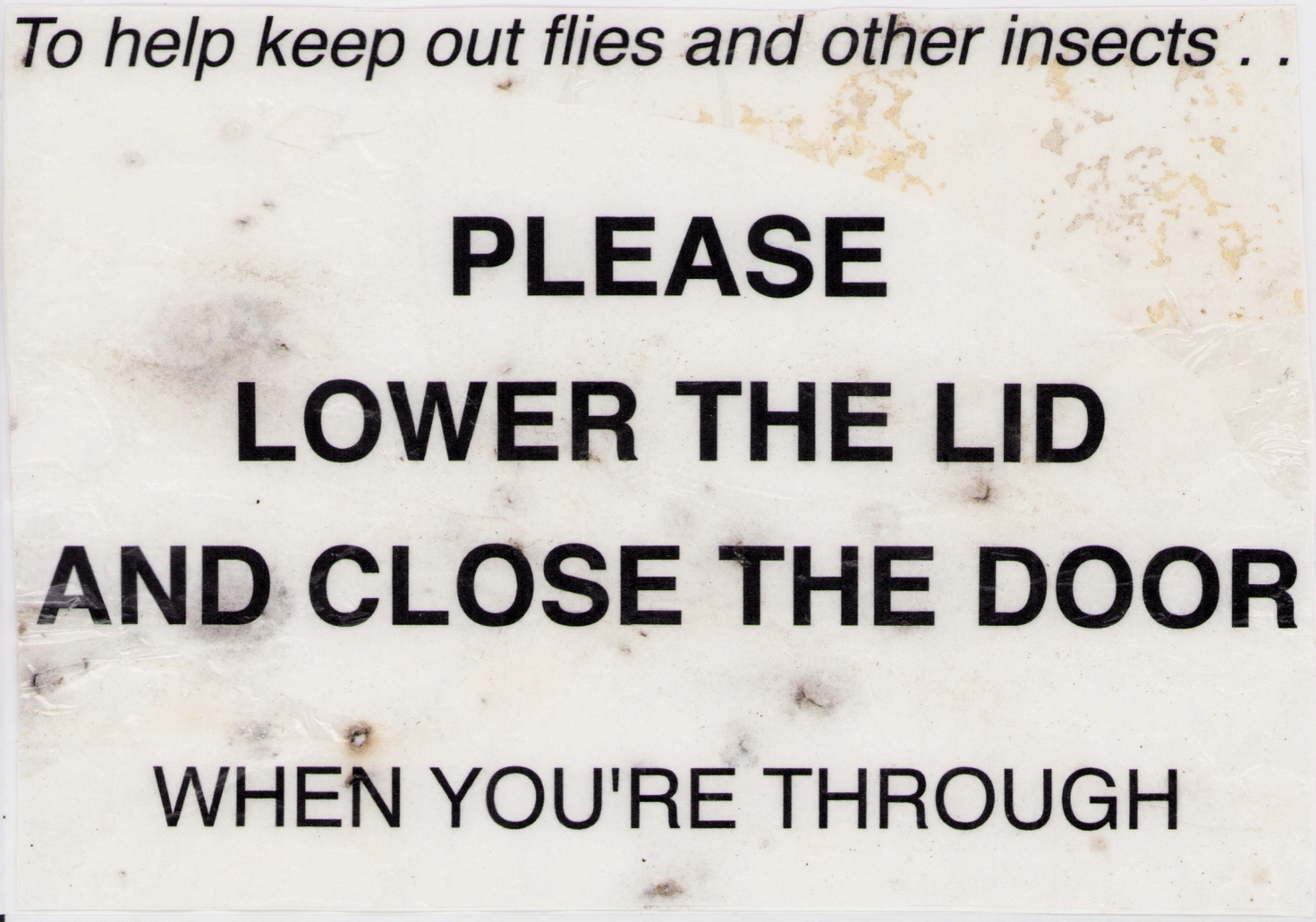
[22] *National Police Gazette* (New York, NY) 27 August 1881.

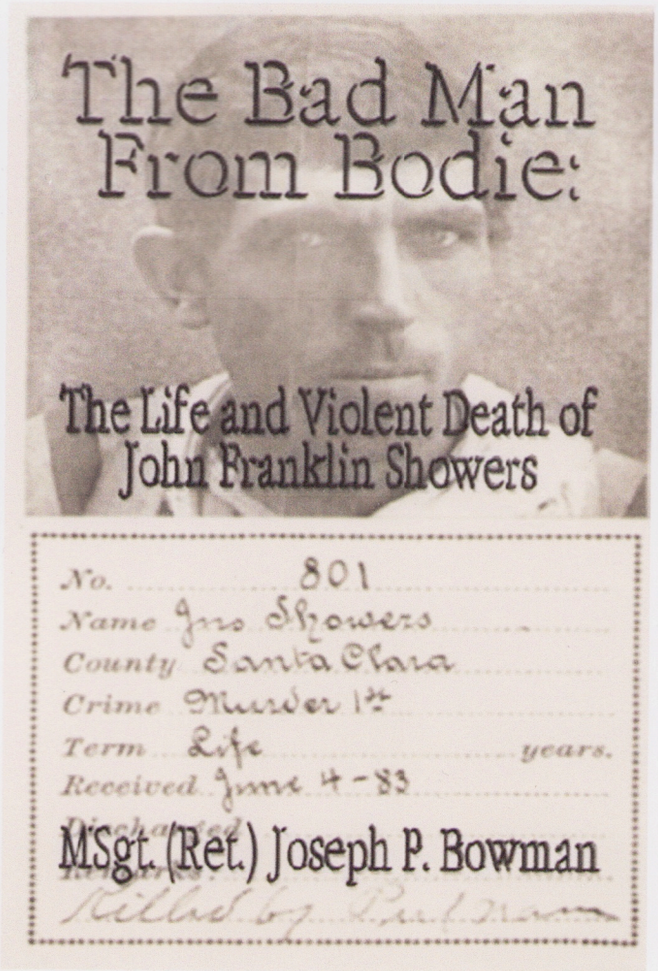
[23] America's western heroes were not always cowboys. During Bodie's boom the country idolized Indian-fighting frontiersmen, such as Daniel Boone, Davy Crockett, Kit Carson, and John C. Fremont, who embodied skill, bravery, and moral values. It should be no surprise that showmen Buffalo Bill Cody, Texas Jack

Omohundro, and Pawnee Bill marketed themselves as Indian-fighting "scouts" (not cowboys) and donned stage costumes made of fringed buckskin to evoke their frontiersman-like experiences. Other self-promoting cavaliers of frontier melodrama, particularly Wild Bill Hickok, George A. Custer, and Calamity Jane, groomed their public personas by sporting buckskins. Not until years later did cowboys and their distinctive manner of dress become popular. Wild West shows probably did the most to transform America's favorite folk heroes from leather-stalking explorers to quick-shooting cowpunchers by featuring cattle drovers, beginning in 1883. Recognizing the drawing power of rodeo stunts, Cody and other showmen aggressively burnished the cowboy's mixed-raced, shiftless, thieving image into that of noble white heirs to the frontiersman's legacy. Throughout the next century, creative fiction and imaginative screenplays portrayed ranch hands as armed moral crusaders on horseback who lived by a chivalric Code of the West and never cussed, smoked, gambled, got drunk, or visited brothels. Celluloid cowboys now symbolize frontier America and stylized buckaroo garb has become so fashionable that everywhere people evoke imaginary men and women of a bygone era by wearing "western apparel," making it difficult to believe that most Old Westerners did not earn their livings by herding beef.

Today, Bodie is preserved in a state of arrested decay. Only a small part of the town survives. Visitors can walk the deserted streets of a town that once was a bustling area of activity. Interiors remain as they were left and stocked with goods. Bodie is open all year, but the long road that leads to the town is usually closed in the winter due to heavy snowfall, so the majority of visitors to the park come during the summer months.

The California State Parks' ranger station is located in one of the original homes on Green Street.





The Bad Man from Bodie: The Violent Death of John Franklin

Showers Paperback – November 14,

The Bad Man From Bodie was a mythical figure borne from the lawlessness of an east California mining town, and one obtuse cowboy-John Franklin Showers-adopted this moniker as his own. In 1883, he eagerly joined a conniving Los Gatos saloonkeeper and his trusty sidekick who concocted a plan to rob William P. Renowden in the hills above Lexington. Showers suggested that they torture the old man to convince him to reveal where his treasure was hidden, which meant they would have to kill him. In the wake of this evil scheme, two peaceful men met a brutal death that was-at that time-unparalleled in the Old West. Santa Clara County was outraged, and one newsman aptly described the incident as, "One of the most revolting murders ever committed in any country."

Panoramic view of Bodie from the cemetery on the hill. The townspeople passed judgement to determine who would be buried inside the fence with the respectable citizens and who would be placed outside the fenced area in the lawless and sinful element.

10-25-1980

Christmas in Bodie 1898

FROM THE SAN FRANCISCO CALL of December 25, 1898.

On December 24, 1880, I was up in Bodie with Dan Callarner a prospector. We were anxious to reach the mining property of the Homer Co., and though it was 28 miles from town and a building snow storm had set in, we started early, hoping to get there before nightfall. We had gone only a short distance when we began to regret starting on such a trip on such a day, but we determined not to turn back, although the snow was falling so thickly that we had to trust almost entirely on the horses to keep the rough road. About 10 miles from town, however, we were very nearly thrown out of the sleigh by a sudden jump of our animals to one side, which landed the outfit on a heavy drift. We found the cause to be a man lying apparently dead in the snow. After resuscitating him, he told us that he had started for Lundy, and had become exhaused and had given up in despair. He was poorly clad and very dejected saying he had no friends and that he would be better off dead, but we took him into the sleigh, intending to give him a lift to his destination which we were to pass thru.

The added weight made things worse for the horses, and by 9 o'clock at night we had only reached the house of George Barnes at the junction of the main road and the Mill Road, where we obtained permission to remain until morning. George and his little girl had retired but Mrs. Barnes was up dressing a Christmas tree, and she gave a good hot supper and a bed and lent the old man blankets enough to make him comfortable in the barn on the hay.

The next morning we rose early, as the little girl roused the house with her joy over her presents, and I went out to see the horses. I found the old man much refreshed by his sleep and brought him in with me to breakfast. The child took a fancy to him at once and showed him her toys. A book had her name "Jessie Barnes" written on a leaf, and the old man eagerly asked her fathers name. George came in just then and the stranger stood up and held out his hand.

"Don't you know me?" he said. "If you are the son of Jessie and Richard Barnes, you ought not to have quite forgotten my face."

And George put his arms around the old man's neck and said, "Father!"

It was a long story about their separation - Richard had come to California while his son was a mere boy, hoping to mend his fortunes, but things had gone wrong and he had lost track of his family.

Reaching manhood, George had come out here also, but he had prospered and had a comfortable home in which to care for his father in his old age, now that strange combination of circumstances had brought the two, who had not seen each other for over twenty years, together again.

"Santa Claus brought me lots of presents and a grandfather too," said little Jessie. "I think he is better to me than he is to most little girls." . . . And I think he was.

BODIE

Ghost town frozen in time

It took the luck of an accidental cave-in to uncover gold ore and launch the boomtown of Bodie back in 1879. But good luck is no accident for travelers today to this stunning and famous ghost town near Bridgeport, just off Scenic 395.

If you're lucky, you'll get to see the legendary town of Bodie right after a summer thunderstorm, the hail still melting and the streets running with water racing down from the hills above. A stunning sun will edge around departing clouds, while the town itself glows in the uncertain light that follows.

Or you could be lucky enough to visit Bodie during autumn, when the 13-mile drive in from Scenic 395 offers golden fields of grasses, colorful groves of aspen, and the yellow flowers of green-stemmed rabbitbrush. At Bodie, the low autumn light casts dramatic shadows. Rickety shacks and wooden monuments alike take on the deep three dimensions of their every splintering plank and hidden alcove.

Or, if you time it right, your good fortune may bring you to Bodie on cross-country skis after a surprise snowstorm closes the last few miles of road. Your only companions will be a few animal tracks and the ghosts of miners who stuck it out through all manner of bad weather. Brilliant white snow reflects sunshine onto the weathered wood, which in turn releases golden light from within its swirling grain.

In fact, each trip to Bodie is filled with such luck. There's something in the desolate setting, big sky, dozens and dozens of gracefully aging buildings and the town's outrageous history that guarantees a memorable time. Quite simply, no Eastern Sierra trip is complete without a visit.

This place drips with history. The Bodie Mining District dates back to 1860, when strikes in Virginia City and elsewhere in the Eastern Sierra drew miners away from the played-out western slope to the desert ranges. But paydirt was a long time coming. Most miners eked out a living or moved on, penniless. Some investors lost fortunes chasing the elusive ore.

Then, in 1877, a cave-in uncovered a rich ledge of ore. Within a year the rush to Bodie was on. Somehow, despite the rough-and-tumble trade, hot summers, frigid winters, and a dearth of wood and water, a wild town of nearly 10,000 people sprang up. It was a rough place in a rough land. Bodie became known throughout the West for a lawlessness noteworthy even among its notoriously vice-ridden competition — namely every other violent mining camp.

Gambling, gunplay and drinking ran rampant. The legendary, perhaps mythical "Bad Man From Bodie" sprang to life in this sordid outpost, a man so unruly, so ornery, so lacking in morals that he ruled the town through sheer meanness.

Still, profits soared. Miners extracted an estimated $30 million in gold and silver during Bodie's heyday. But first a stock market crash and then a major fire destroyed much of Bodie. The party was over by 1888, when only a few hundred stayed on in the face of these repeated disasters. Sporadic mining continued until 1940.

Before it could fall into total disrepair, however, Bodie became a state historic park in 1962. California has since maintained Bodie in a state of "arrested decay" — basic repairs keep buildings standing, but no restorations detract from the abandoned, ghost-town atmosphere.

Dozens of magnificent old buildings still stand, along with the decaying ruins of hundreds more. Though there may have been 65 saloons scattered throughout Bodie at one time, today the signature building is the 1882 Methodist church. Its bell tower dominates the scene from many perspectives.

The main streets can bustle. Give yourself the best chance to remoteness and magic by avoiding midsummer or holiday visits if possible.

Remember, too, not to take anything from the park, no matter how tempting. Oft-proven legend has it that bad luck will befall anyone who steals from this ghost town. And if ever legend will show as fact, it'll happen at Bodie.

United States
In Bodie, California, abandoned buildings and a rusted-out 1937 Chevy glow eerily in this hour-long exposure. The former gold-mining town—designated a National Historic Landmark in 1961—is preserved in a state of arrested decay.

PHOTO: BERTHOLD STEINHILBER, LAIF/REDUX

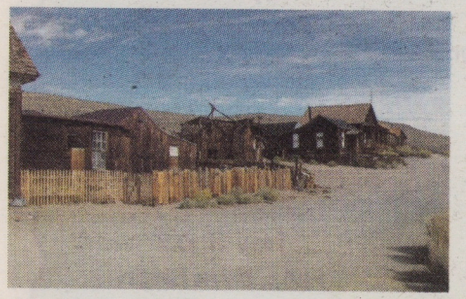
Take an Unforgettable Trip into the Past

By Don Quilici

If you are in the Lee Vining-Bridgeport area of the California Alps and would like an enjoyable break from fishing, here is a suggestion for a walking tour that will take you on an unforgettable trip into the past.

Be sure to take a camera with you, it will be a memorable experience.

Entering Bodie State Historic Park.
Photo by Elaine Quilici



One of the streets in Bodie.
Photo by Don Quilici

The suggestion:

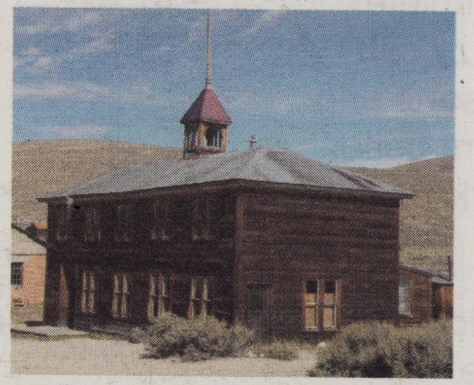
Set time aside for a leisurely walking tour of the old mining town of Bodie (maintained by California State Parks in a state of "arrested decay") located just off U.S. 395 between Lee Vining and Bridgeport.

How to get there:

At the North foot of Conway Summit on U.S. 395, turn onto the well-signed, paved road that leads East to the Bodie town site.

The first 10 miles are paved, however, be advised the last 3 miles are a dirt road, where you should drive at a slower speed. It's bumpy and dusty!

When you reach the State Park toll booth at the entrance to the park, admission fees to Bodie State Historic Park are $5.00 for 18 and over, $3.00 for 17 and under, and 1 year old and under are free. Once you've paid your fees, park your vehicle in the parking area and enjoy a trip into the past.



Schoolhouse.
Photo by Don Quilici

J. S. Cain House.
Photo by Don Quilici

Bodie's beginning:

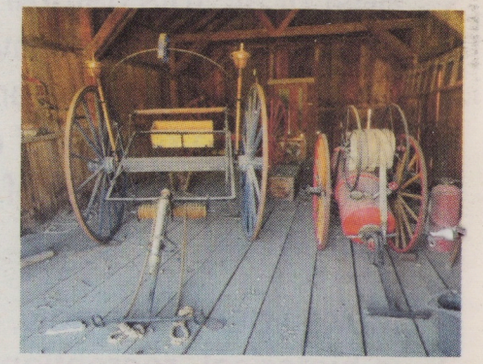
A miner by the name of W.S. Bodey of Poughkeepsie, New York discovered gold in that area in 1859. He died later in a blizzard, is buried somewhere on the mountainside above the cemetery, and the town was named in his honor.

Bodie's largest population:

It has been estimated that at the height of its gold mining activities (1877-1881), Bodie had a population of about 8,000 residents.

During that time, the town had:

A bank, barber shop, boarding houses, Chinatown, churches, doctor offices, fire station, hotels, Independent Order of Old Fellows (I.O.O.F.) meeting hall, jail house, machine house, Masonic Hall/Chinese laundry, miners meeting hall, two morgues, post office, restaurants, saloons (more than 60), sawmill, school house (at one time it had more than 600 students), stable/blacksmith shop, and houses of prostitution in the red light district.



Fire fighting apparatus in the firehouse.
Photo by Elaine Quilici

Today: 2016

Once the boom was over, Bodie's population began to diminish, and today, only about 5-10 percent of the town's buildings remain standing.

Bodie became a California State Park in 1962.

It is open year round, however in the winter you may need to use snowmobiles,

CALIFORNIA
DEPARTMENT OF
PARKS AND RECREATION

Bodie State Parks Talks/Tours

FIRE IN THE HEAD! BODIE'S BREWERY PAST

By Bodine

Miners yell, "Fire in the hole!" when blasting rock, but when they hit the barstools they'd yell, "Fire in the head!" throwing back some Bodie Whiskey, with a Bodie Brewery lager chaser. Bodie is well known for its mining past and its current ghost town status, but in the 1870s and '80s, it was also known for its alcohol.

There's not much information about breweries in Bodie, and most of that was probably destroyed in the 1892 fire along with most of the town, John Queirolo, collector and historian, told The Sheet.

There are plenty of accounts of Bodie's drinking culture, and how it got people through the bitter winters, as well as the violence that came with it. At the height of Bodie's boom, there were six breweries in town, 65 saloons on the mile-long Main Street, as many as three newspapers, numerous brothels with ladies like Madame Moustache, and the one church. Most breweries didn't last for more than a year or two, but some original bottles exist and are for sale at www.icollector.com and www.invaluable.com.

Bodie's beer makers included Esmerelda Brewery, Pat Fahey's Mono Brewery, Pioneer Brewery, Master's Brewery and Bodie Brewery. A.A. Carion Brewery and Chicago Brewery are mentioned on www.oldbreweries.com, but their existence could not be substantiated. According to accounts in "Bodie: 1859-1962" by Terri Geissinger, Interpreter at Bodie State Historic Park, the Bodie Brewery was purchased by John McKenzie, who changed the name to McKenzie Brewery. R.A. Leale brewed Bodie Root Beer.

PHOTO COURTESY JEFF SULLIVAN

Bottles line the Sam Leon Bar in Bodie. In the 1870s and '80s, Bodie was home to 65 saloons, as many as six breweries and several houses of ill-repute. And don't forget Bodie Whiskey to get you through the cold, dark winters.

"Bodie was never dry," Queirolo said.

He said the beer produced was a steam German beer served at room temperature with a high alcohol content. Bodie was also known for its Bodie Whiskey that kicked like a mule, even though it was imported from the Bay Area, according to Marguerite Sprague in her 2003 book, "Bodie's Gold." The buzz probably had more to do with the elevation of where it was consumed than the mythical quality of the whiskey.

The Bodie Standard ran several stories on the whiskey, as journalists are known for their thirst. One article from 1879 read, "That's a real genuine whiskey; kinder a cross between a circular saw and a wildcat. That takes hold quick and holds on long."

"Outside its mining industries [Bodie's] only industry are the breweries," Michael Platt says in his book, "Bodie: The Mines Are Looking Well."

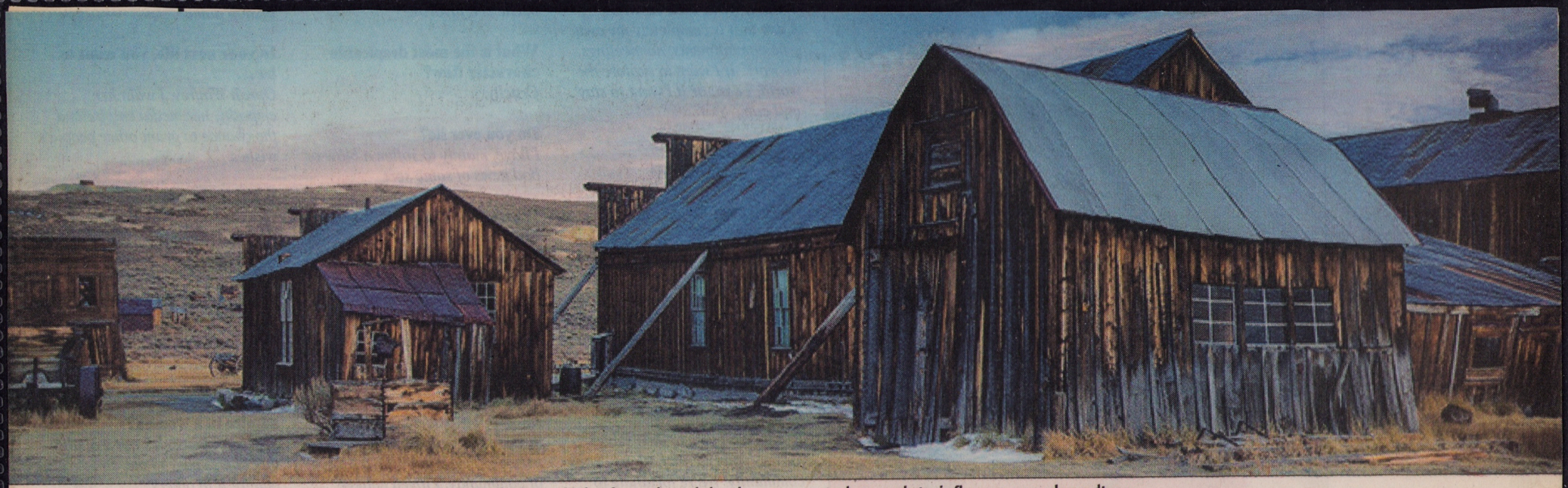
During prohibition, whiskey was stored in the cemetery, according to Quierolo and Sprague. She writes that little compartments were hollowed out in headstones with screw-on metal plates where bottles and flasks were stashed. Once prohibition was repealed, the cemetery didn't receive the attention it once did, says Sprague.

The 1892 fire destroyed the saloons and brothels, but the church survived.

Drinking may have led to a pair of Levis recently found stuffed into an air vent on the roof of a miner's bar. Queirolo said the denim jeans are more than a hundred years old.

Queirolo was also the creator of the California Counties exhibits for both Inyo and Mono Counties for the 2016 California State Fair held in Sacramento. Mono County's theme this year centered around breweries in Bodie and the connection to modern local breweries like Black Doubt and Mammoth Brewing Company.

Mono County has already won a Gold Medal for Best Design and a Silver Medal for General Competition in the Fair. Queirolo said Mono County is also one of the contenders to win another gold in the People's Choice category, and those winners will be announced on Sunday, July 24.



Bodie, now a state park, had one of the meanest reputations in the west. Tales from the mining boom town in the late 1800s led to the creation of the fictional "Bad Man from Bodie." The tales revolved more around hearsay, rumors and exaggerations, rather than historical events, but the stories resonated enough to influence popular culture.

Photo courtesy California Parks and Recreat

1-3-2015

Exactly who was the Bad Man from Bodie?

In the 1880s, a disheveled thug might empty any saloon from El Paso to Seattle by tromping in, heavy booted and well heeled, and announcing in a roar that carried over every tumult, that he was "the bad man from Bodie." He usually accompanied this statement with creative descriptions of his prowess, including comparisons to wild cats, redwood trees, thunder storms, and cyclones.

The fleeing patrons had some reason for concern. Bodie, in its boom years between 1877 and 1883, made national news as a center of violence, most of it involving overwrought and over-liquored young men who resorted to firearms to settle their disputes, followed by agonizing wounds and slow marches to Boot Hill.

The older mining towns of California had long since left their rowdy pasts behind.

Newspapers in Oakland, Sacramento and San Francisco were more likely to send a reporter to cover the opening night of a touring theater company than a fracas at a saloon. A fight between alcohol-soaked rowdies in the staid towns of Grass Valley and Nevada City ended up in the police report, not on the front page.

So Bodie's rising murder rate caused occasional editorial comment from city folks and the sedate residents of the Mother Lode country, who wondered why these fellows could not get along without killing each other.

As the 19th century entered it final decades and mining became a routine, corporate affair, fewer and fewer boom towns existed to provide a stage for the theatrics of the "bad man." The drifter, gambler, unscrupulous barkeep, unlucky prospector, too-frequently-drunk miner – all found their choice of residence more and more limited. Until about 1877, few considered Bodie a good destination, for it was simply another struggling cluster of prospects, some of which occasionally produced paying ore.

Then a portion of the Bunker Hill mine collapsed, revealing a bonanza of gold. Mines that had been dormant reopened, and the boomtown of Bodie furnished a new arena for western ne'er-do-wells: a promise of a fresh beginning, a place to start over, a concentration of new wealth that might be exploited by the turn of a card or the sale of bad liquor. "Bad men" flooded in, each prepared to carve out a position at the apex of reputation: boldness, courage, arrogance and honor. They sauntered down the street, intent on a night of drinking, brawling and, as one miner announced, "git in a fight and BE SOMEBODY!"

A newspaper reporter in Sacramento, E. H Clough, found this raucous, adolescent behavior amusing, and wrote a humorous column starring Washoe Pete, "Bodie's baddest bad man." Entering a saloon, eyeing a short-statured newcomer to town, a "mine expert," Pete "leaned over the stranger and shook his fist in the man's face. I'm bad, I'm chief in this yer camp, an' I ken lick the man who says I ain't. I'm a ragin' lion o' the plains, an' every time I hit I kill. I've got an arm like a quartz stamp, an' I crush bones when I strike."

The mining man proposes they have a drink together. Pete bellows, "Ye take me for a josh, eh? I'll show ye what I am afore I git through with ye. Ye don't play me fur no tenderfoot." Pete continues his verbal bullying, he prepares to kick the stranger, "an' a Comstock mule ain't no match for Washoe Pete," he bellows.

But at this moment the mine expert rises from his chair and rams his left fist between Pete's eyes, laying the braggart flat on the floor. The story ends with the "expert" standing the crowd to drinks, and Pete crawling away.

We should note that in this first appearance of the "Bad Man from Bodie," Clough portrayed him as an ineffectual braggart and bully. There was nothing of the slick gunslinger about Pete. In later columns Clough elaborated

OVER

upon the imaginative self-description (and self-deception) of the bad man, "a mile wide and all wool. I weight a ton and when I walk the earth shakes … I'm chief of Murdertown, and I'm dry! Whose treat is it? Don't all speak at once for I'll turn loose and scatter death and destruction Hell bent for election."

Other reporters picked up on Clough's ridicule of the "bad man." First in California, then across the nation, tales of the antics of western thugs and bullies appeared in newspapers. This barbed humor almost always involved Bodie, for the simple reason that "Bad man from Tombstone," or "Bad man from Tybo," simply did not have the rhythmic ring of "Bad man from Bodie."

The residents of Bodie at first took all this in good humor, and in fact replied with their own exaggerated tall tales. One editor lightly ascribed the high number of stabbings and shooting to the altitude of the mining camp, 8,500 feet above sea level, and the impact the thin air had on human behavior. "Yes, it is sad, but only too true, that everybody must fight that comes to Bodie," he concluded in mock seriousness.

Soon, however, law-abiding residents began to resent the continuing barrage of negative publicity. Instead of answering ridicule with ridicule, the editor of the *Bodie Daily Free Press* pointed out that "Bodie is one of the quietest, most law-abiding mining districts." Bodieites who visited the coast tried to convince residents of the cultured cities that their town was a peaceful community, where householders did not bother to lock their doors, so infrequent were robberies.

In Bodie, they protested, a respectable woman might walk down the street alone without fear of vulgar language or harassment.

These remonstrances did little good. The image of the "Bad Man From Bodie" proved resistant to change, and even as Bodie's mines declined and her glory days passed, as the town became a village of a few hundred miners and their families, the fiction of the "Bad Man From Bodie" persisted.

Gradually, perhaps without realizing it, Clough changed the Bad Man's character from braggart to seriously dangerous sociopath. In a column from October, 1880, he describes the appearance of the Bad Man From Bodie in another mining camp, and the preparations of the physician, coroner, undertaker and gravedigger for the inevitable death to follow. No longer is the Bad Man taken out by a meek mining engineer. His gun is at the ready. *The Tybo Sun* reported that "a Bodie man never has two disputes with the same man. This is explained by the fact that he kills him at the first quarrel."

Worse, unbalanced young men began fancying themselves as "The Bad Man From Bodie." In 1880, John Showers of Los Gatos visited Bodie. Friends and relatives in Los Gatos regarded John as weak-minded, credulous and given to bragging about imagined exploits. While in Bodie, John kept out of trouble, possibly because his cousin, James Showers, was sheriff. Upon retuning to Los Gatos after a few months east of the Sierra, John announced he was "The Bad Man From Bodie."

He outfitted himself with suitable clothes, bought a gun, and frequented questionable saloons and bordellos. A couple years into this charade, two men intent upon robbing an old man – who it was rumored, kept a great deal of money in his cabin – enticed John to join in the crime. John's role in the robbery was to terrorize the old man into revealing the location of his wealth. What John did not know, or suspect, was that the principals in this scheme intended to murder both John and their victim once they had the cash, then set fire to the cabin. Suspicion for the foul deed would fall upon John, The Bad Man From Bodie, and the plotters would have the cash to invest in property and businesses.

As it turned out, a friend was visiting the old man that night, a gun fight ensued, leaving the old man and his friend dead and the two instigators wounded. Frantic in their need for flight, the injured men sent John back into town for horses rather than kill him.

Everything unraveled. Artless John naively told the entire story. Eventually the killers were hanged, and John sentenced to state prison. He died there, killed by a fellow inmate. John Showers and his family learned the bad man comedy's dark side.

Most self-described bad men came to less disastrous ends. An anecdote from San Francisco in later years tells of a rough character who entered a saloon, and shouted that he was The Bad Man From Bodie. The police were rung up and they hustled him off to jail.

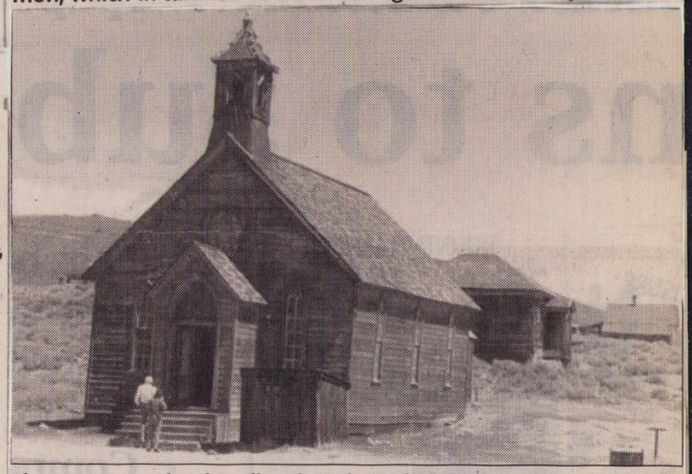
In The Bad Man from Bodie (http://www.bodie-history.com/badman.htm) author Michael H. Piatt describes the fading of the bad man legend as mining camps disappeared.

Where once the fur trapper, the wagon master and the prospector reigned as the symbols of the West, now rode the cowboy and the lawman. In novels and movies, heroics sprouted from the ranches of the Great Plains, and towns such as Fort Worth and Dodge City became "the West," although they were little more than half way across the continent.

Yet even in this context, the Bad Man From Bodie survived into the mid-twentieth century. E. L. Doctorow published "Welcome to Hard Times" in 1960, a novel set in a small settlement in Dakota Territory. A murderous thug invades the village of Hard Times, a man hailing from (where else) Bodie! He terrorizes the population, murdering those who challenge him, and burning buildings to revenge imagined slights.

In 1967 a movie based on the novel came out, with Aldo Ray in the role of the Bad Man From Bodie, Henry Fonda as the hesitant hero (and Bishop resident Elisha Cook, Jr. as the undertaker, who is slain during the bad man's first terrorizing visit).

With many young miners traveling to Bodie seeking their fortune and beer flowing in the saloons, violent confrontations were common, which in turn led to Bodie's rough and tumble reputation.



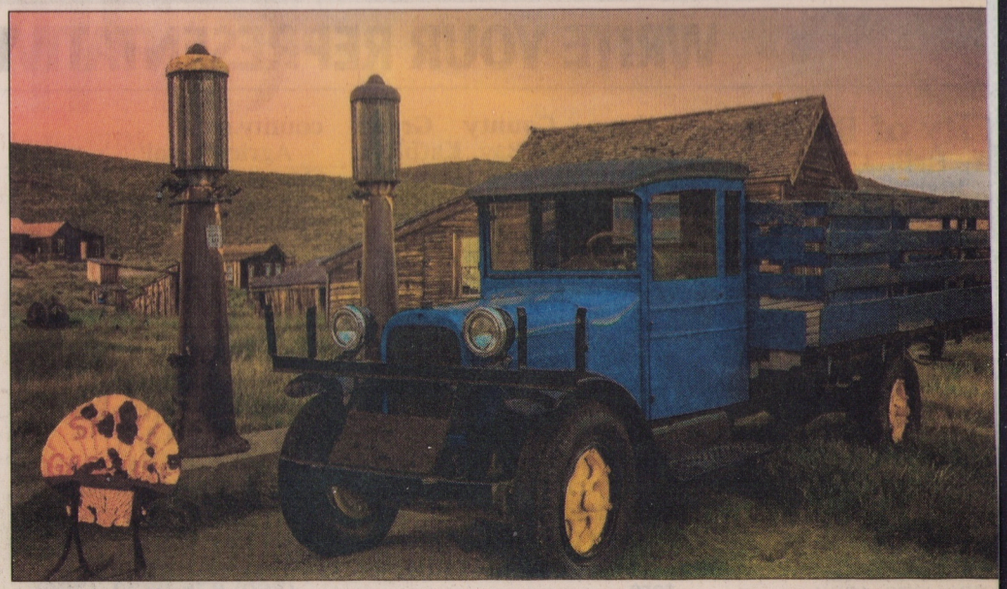
The townspeople of Bodie often defended their community, claiming that it was no different than most boom towns,

Though the mining town is now abandoned, the legend of the Bad Man from Bodie remains.

Bodie at night.

Photos by Ed Nahin

Photographers take night tour of Bodie



Sunset at Bodie.

Blooming rabbitbrush at Bodie.

Rebirth of 'a fearfully and wonderfully bad place'

Stunning new work revives the history of America's favorite ghost town: Bodie

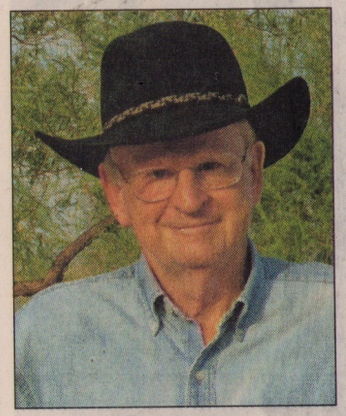
Register Staff

Called "A fearfully and wonderfully bad place," by *Bodie Daily Free Press* on Jan. 7, 1880, the Bodie of yesteryear had as notorious a reputation then as its remnant ghost town does today, drawing in roughly 200,000 visitors annually as a California State Historic Park.

A stunning new publication titled "Bodie: Good Times and Bad" rekindles the life into the historic settlement through the masterful storytelling of writer Nicholas Clapp with plentiful reproductions of historic documents, images and accounts.

The text combined with the powerful images of present-day Bodie from photographer Will Furman has resulted in a work that is sure to please.

Many of Furman's photos might be mistaken for double exposures. That's because he uses a technique he's dubbed "inside-out" photography, in which he captures scenes at just the right angle and in just the right lighting so that the scene inside a window blends perfectly with the scene outside. The result is a hauntingly beautiful composite that speaks to past and present.



Nicholas Clapp

Clapp's storytelling lends its own special magic.

"Bodie State Historic Park is a very special place and this is a very special book," said Brian Cahill, acting chief of the Interpretation and Education Division for California State Parks. "Will Furman's captivating photos tell a powerful story on their own, but accompanied by Nick Clapp's compelling narrative, the place truly comes alive."

The pair plan to promote the book through a series of signings and presentations throughout California – Clapp handling the southern half of the state and Furman the north.

Readership, on the other hand, is expected to expand far beyond state lines, with Clapp already giving consideration to October's annual Frankfurt Book Fair, noting that "Both Germans and the French love the American West, and its frontier lore."

The park is northeast of Yosemite, 13 miles east of U.S. Highway 395 on Bodie Road (Highway 270), seven miles south of Bridgeport.

From U.S. 395 take State Route 270. Go east 10 miles to the end of the pavement and continue 3 miles on a dirt road to Bodie. The last 3 miles can at times be rough. Reduced speeds are necessary. Call the park if there are any questions about road conditions.

The park currently is closed due to the recent earthquake in Hawthorne, Nev. Park staff are assessing any damage that may have occurred in the park and will reopen as soon as possible.

For more information, call (760) 647-6445.

SATURDAY, MARCH 11, 2017

Bodie: Good Times and Bad" is now available through Sunbelt Publications.

Courtesy Sunbelt Publicat

1964

a walk in old BODIE

10¢

State of California
The Resources Agency
Department of Parks and Recreation
DIVISION OF BEACHES AND PARKS
P.O. Box 2390, Sacramento, California 95811

6/64

BODIE
DRUG STORE
BLACKSMITH
FEE

WELCOME

Bodie is located in the county of Mono, eighteen miles east of Bridgeport, the County Seat, and eleven miles from the junction of State Highway Route No. 395. This is one of the most notable ghost towns of the West and is of outstanding significance because of its total isolation, number of remaining buildings, and their unusually good state of preservation. Bodie typifies the life and times of the mining frontier.

With the decline of gold strikes along California's Mother Lode prospectors crossed the mountains and searched the eastern Sierra slope and the pinyon, pine, and sagebrush covered mountains and canyons for "color". In 1858, the same year as the Pike's Peak gold rush in Colorado, prospectors discovered what became known as the "Comstock Lode" at Virginia City, which resulted in a mad rush to the high desert country of Nevada and eastern California. Bodie played an important part in this wild search for mineral wealth and like other gold and silver towns of this wide-open country lived and "died with her boots on".

This walk in old Bodie will take you by all that remains of the lives of miners, merchants, girls, freighters, and all the other characters that swelled Bodie to over 10,000 people at her peak. Circumstance and choice decreed that many would spend eternity in these hills. The boards and stones that mark their last resting place are in truth a monument to a people that were tough enough to build a town full of work, adventure, business, love, humor, culture, and violent death.

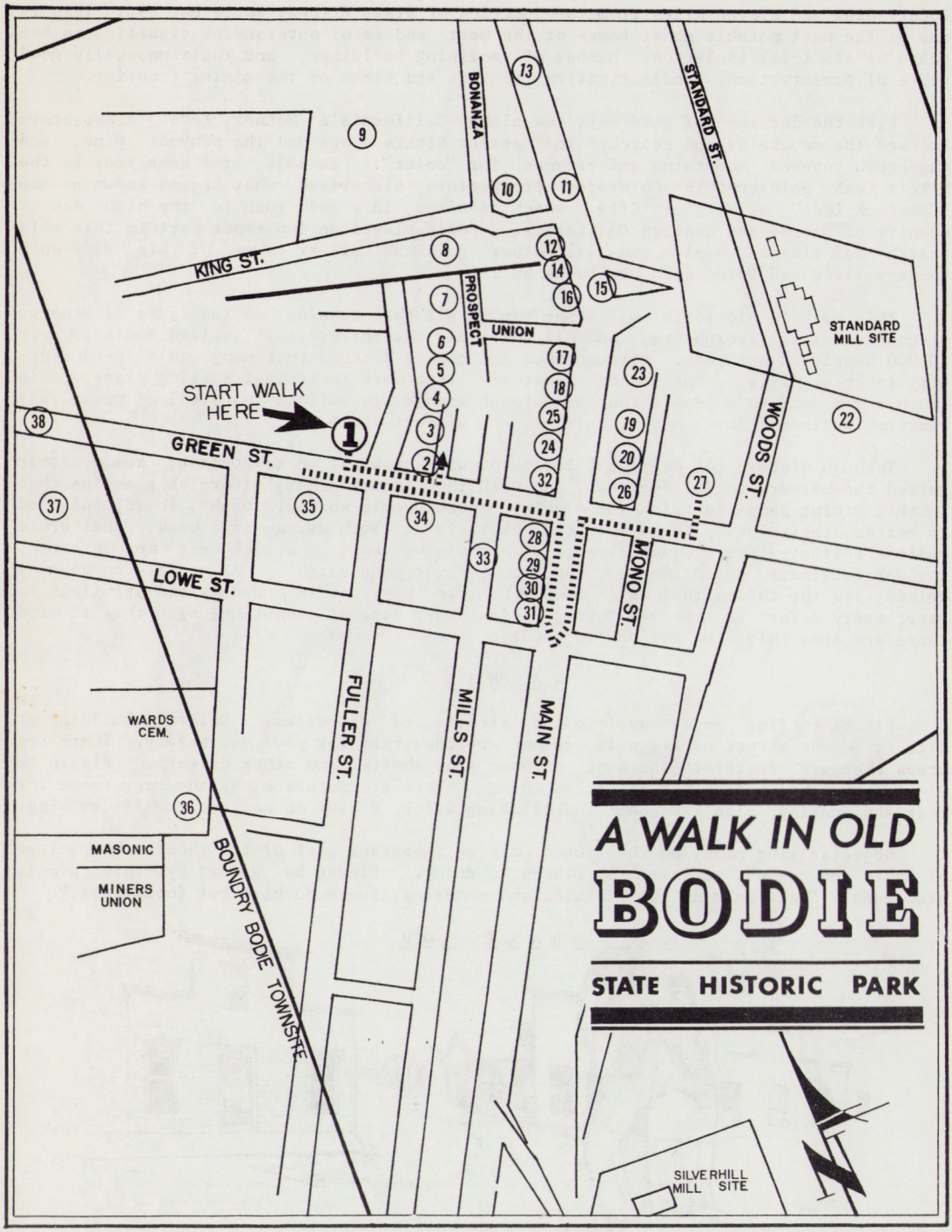
Through winters 40 degrees below zero with snowfall up to 20 feet, summers that raised the mercury to 100 degrees, and with the "tommyknockers" (Cornish gremlins that inhabit mining camps to trick the miners), these people worked, fought, loved, and died to better their lot. These were the characters, both strong and weak, that wrote Bodie's epithet--"The wildest street of any mining camp, the wickedest men on earth, the worst climate out of doors, and the best water on earth". As we walk where they walked, see the things that were commonplace to them, it is our duty and privilege to exert every effort to preserve Bodie in its exact present condition; with this in mind there are some things we ask you to observe.

WARNING

Please confine your travel to the streets and sidewalks. Unless a building or site is on the street or sidewalk, do not approach them for your own safety. There are areas that are restricted because of open mine shafts and other dangers. Please be alert for signs and do not disregard them. There are points along the tour route for rest and smoking; also restrooms and drinking water. Please do not smoke while walking.

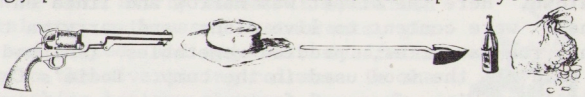
Objects lying about on the ground are an important part of the ghost town picture of Bodie and should be left for others to enjoy. Please be guided by this simple statement: "Take nothing but pictures and memories, leave nothing but footprints!"

THANK YOU


A WALK IN OLD
BODIE
STATE HISTORIC PARK
START WALK HERE
KING ST.
GREEN ST.
LOWE ST.
BONANZA
PROSPECT
UNION
STANDARD ST.
WOODS ST.
MONO ST.
FULLER ST.
MILLS ST.
MAIN ST.
STANDARD MILL SITE
WARDS CEM.
MASONIC
MINERS UNION
BOUNDRY BODIE TOWNSITE
SILVERHILL MILL SITE

A WALK IN OLD BODIE

Numbers refer to locations of numbered posts along the walk. If you find a numbered post is missing, please let the staff know. A map of your route is opposite.



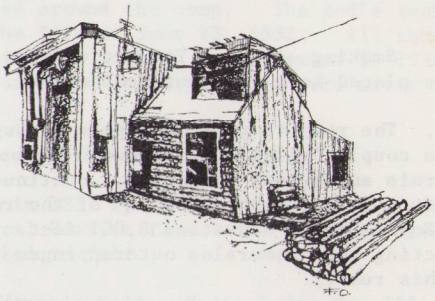
Before you is Bodie...elevation 8,375 feet...the last of the old-time mining camps; the last in type of the pioneering days of California. It is the genuine article, just as the miners, fires, and time have left it.

1. You are on Green Street at the Methodist Church which was erected in 1878-79 at the peak of Bodie's boom. Reverend Hinkle was its first minister. This is the only church still standing in Bodie and only Protestant church erected. The last service was delivered in 1932 by E. J. Clinton of San Francisco who restored the church. Since then the interior has been badly vandalized. The Ten Commandments painted on oil cloth hung behind the pulpit. "Thou Shalt Not Steal" has been stolen. The Catholic Church erected about 1878 burned in 1928. It was located at the east end of Green Street.

2. James Stuart Cain Residence: James S. Cain arrived in Bodie at the age of 25. He entered the lumber business and placed barges on Mono Lake to transport timber across the lake for use in the Bodie mines. He expanded into wagon freighting and with Thomas Holt leased the Bodie Railroad and Lumber Company. With Joe Maguire, he leased a block of ground in the Standard Mine and took out $90,000 in gold in 90 days, when he uncovered the Fortuna ledge. Standard would not renew the lease. Later, through a lawsuit he acquired the Standard Mine and became the principal owner of property in town.

Turn left at the Cain residence and proceed up Park Street.

3. The small sawmill was used for cutting firewood. Bodie winters can be severe and the 30 to 40 degree below zero weather required plenty of firewood to keep the poorly constructed houses warm. The snow is sometimes 10 to 20 feet deep. The winter of 1878-79 was one of the most terrible in the history of Bodie. The people were not prepared and many died from exposure, disease, and violence. Preparing for a Bodie winter was, and still is, a monumental task.



4. Donnelly House: Owned by Charlie Donnelly, a butcher, who married Annie Pagdin. Later occupied by E. W. Billeb and his wife Dolly, daughter of Victor and Ella Cain. Mr. Billeb was the last Superintendent and Manager of the old Bodie and Benton Railroad (original name). The garden in front of this house was the only green spot in town. Hops grown here were said to be the only green plants that could survive in Bodie.

5. Cameron House: Later the Stuart Cain house.

6. Seiler House: Seiler owned a saloon on the corner of Union and Main Streets.

7. Lester E. Bell House: Mr. Bell was in charge of the Cyanide Plant erected by J. S. McCone and J. S. Cain. This was, at that time, the largest cyanide plant in the

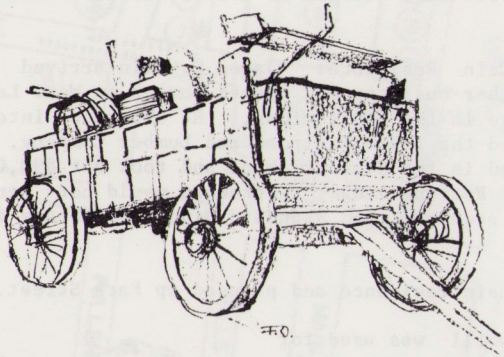
United States. The Cyanide process of extracting gold was perfected in Bodie. This process enabled the working of the mine tailings for gold.

8. Continue to Prospect Place and down the hill to King Street and the site of the once large Chinatown. Here the street was narrow and lined on each side by wooden buildings. The Chinese were content to live alone and carry on their native customs and traditions. They ran laundries, peddled vegetables (shipped in by express) and once brought in and sold all the wood used in the camp. Bodie's Chinatown had its own Joss House, Tongs, opium smoking, faro and fantan games.

9. Ahead of you was Bonanza Street, Maiden Lane, and Virgin Alley where lived the ladies of the evening--Rosa May of "The Highgrade", Emma Goldsmith of "The Ozark", "Madame Mustache", "The Beautiful Doll", and many others. Business flourished here due to "highgrading" which was openly carried on by the miners.

10. Town Jail: It was never much of a jail but it had its day. The bail for "guests" was $5.00.

11. Stuart Kirkwood Livery Stable: In 1879-80 Bodie had reached its pinnacle. Ten thousand people inhabited the town. To feed, clothe, and supply the population required a tremendous amount of freight. Freight teams and supply wagons hauled tons of supplies and mining equipment into town.



12. Smoking Area: You are welcome to smoke here. Please use the trash containers placed here for your convenience.

13. The road to your left goes through Bodie Canyon and passes the Blanchard Toll House a couple miles out of town; then to Sunshine nine miles from Bodie (State of California and Nevada boundary); continues through Devils Gate; then Del Monte, ten miles from Bodie; the junction of the road to Aurora; and on to Hawthorne over the Lucky Boy Summit, elevation 8,001 feet. Mark Twain lived briefly in Aurora while prospecting the Esmeralda outcroppings. (Make inquiries before attempting to travel over this road.)

14. Site of Stone Warehouse: Large warehouses were constructed in which to store supplies for the long, cold, Bodie winters, and large stables were built to take care of the heavy teaming. Some of the stone buildings were built into excavations blasted out of the solid granite hillside. Rooms or chambers were formed out of the granite rubble.

Historical Note: There were few brick buildings in Bodie. Hank Blanchard operated a lime kiln located about 12 miles from Bodie in Mono Lake Basin. The kiln was about one and one half miles from the Lime Kiln Siding of the Bodie and Benton Railroad (later Mono Lake Railway and Lumber Co.). Paiute Indians working at the kiln for Blanchard would haul the sacked lime to the railroad and load it on the flat cars for delivery at the Bodie terminal of the railroad on the hill east of town. The lime was then hauled to the Standard Mining Co. lime house. It was used in connection with the milling and cyaniding of the gold and silver ores.

15. Main Street: Turn right up Main Street. This street was once over a mile long and built solidly with one and two-story frame buildings. "At the high noon of its great days there were thirty mines in operation in Bodie...and the saloons, pothouses, restaurants, gin mills, ale stoops and allied and adjacent deadfalls averaged, according to the advertising columns in the 'Bodie Standard' something better than one to a mine-shaft. Having dined at Stewarts Hotel, the Arlington, the Bodie House, Brown's or...the Occidental, Grand Central or Windsor, the workman off duty was confronted by a bewildering choice of oases on which to lavish his patronage. He had his choice of Wagner's Corner, the Parole Saloon, the Rifle Club, the Cabinet, the Senate, the Commercial, the Champion, Peters and Aldriges, the Gymnasium, Mark's Saloon, the Sawdust Corner or the Bonanza. At all of these, the products of the town's three breweries--the Bodie, the Pioneer, the Pat Fahey's--were the favored chasers.

"...There was almost sure to be a company of EAST LYNNE or TEN NIGHTS IN A BAR ROOM, both prime favorites performing at the Miners' Union Hall. And after the show, at an hour when high life was really in order, the prudent reveler could save his final and best thirst of the evening to be dissipated at one or both of the town's ranking resorts of quality and fashion: The Maison Doree Restaurant, where the best quail in aspic in all the Esmeralda region was served for supper, or the Philadelphia Beer Depot, opposite to Wells Fargo, the Handsomest Saloon in Bodie and patronized by all classes. Sandwiches for customers at all hours. The river of life flowed very full in Bodie, both around and through its citizens." (Quoted from The Saga of Wells Fargo.)

16. Site of Bodie Bank: During the boom days, Bodie had two banks--the Bodie Bank and the Mono County Bank. In 1890 James S. Cain bought the Bodie Bank from E. L. Benedict and invested in a variety of businesses around the camp. The Bodie Bank escaped the fire of 1892 but was destroyed in the fire of June 23, 1932. All that you see here is the remains of the vault. The bank was robbed on September 1, 1916, by four men. They got away with $4,000.00 in money and jewelry. They were never captured.

17. Site of another Post Office: Destroyed in the fire of 1932.

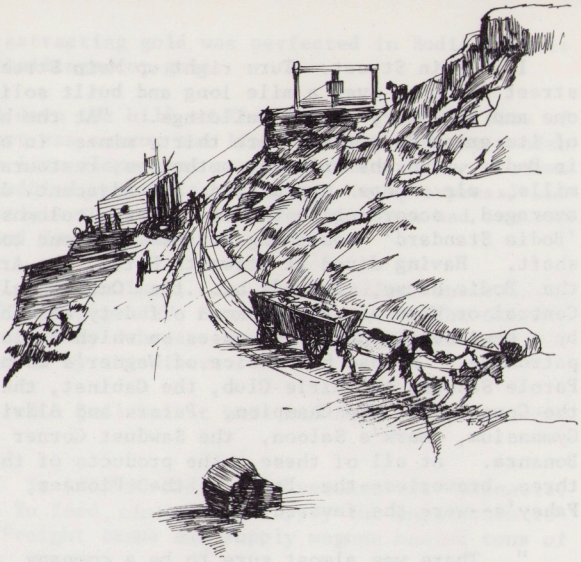
18. Site of Mono County Bank: Organized in 1877 by Timothy Hopkins, the adopted son of Mark Hopkins of the "Big-Four" and Central Pacific fame. The bank operated until 1884 when it closed with all accounts settled in full.

19. Across the street is the site of the Masonic Hall. Bodie Lodge No. 252, F. & A. M., received its dispensation July 30, 1878, and its charter October 16, 1879, at which time there were 13 members. It reached its peak of 93 in 1882. The Lodge passed from existence in 1918 when the remaining members voted to consolidate with Winnedumah Lodge No. 287 of Bishop.

20. Site of the U. S. Hotel: The hotel was a large two-story building with dining room and hotel rooms. The buildings in the business district, for the most part, were typical false-front structures with rustic siding on the front and board and batten elsewhere.

21. Standard Mine and Mill: The Standard Mine, on the east slope of Bodie Bluff, was first known as the Bunker Hill Mine and was registered in August, 1859. It passed through several hands and was sold to four partners for $67,500. They changed the name and incorporated as the Standard Company in April, 1877.

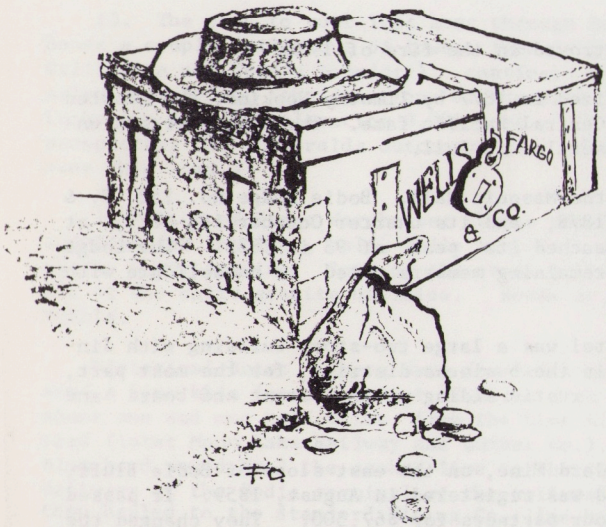
The James S. Cain Company owned the Midnight Mine adjacent to the Standard. In 1915 it was proven in court that the Management of the Standard had deliberately and fraudulently tapped the Midnight property. The damages awarded to Midnight were so great that by a compromise Cain took over the Standard property. The mill operated 20 stamps. The success of this mine resulted in the 1878 rush to Bodie. The population rose from about twenty in 1860-1877 to an estimated ten thousand miners, gamblers, businessmen, prostitutes, and speculators in 1879. The mill was destroyed by fire in 1896, but later rebuilt. While the boom lasted some thirty companies produced $400,000 of bullion per month; the Standard mine yielded nearly $15,000,000 over a twenty-five year period.



22. To the right of Standard Mill was the residence of Theodore Hoover, brother of Herbert Hoover. He was General Manager of the Standard Consolidated Mining Company and later Director of the School of Mines at Stanford University.

23. Fire House: The big fire of July 25, 1892, swept the business district off the map except for a few buildings. The June 23, 1932, fire was started by a small boy playing with matches in a vacant building. Part of Main Street was rebuilt after the fire of 1892, but the fire of 1932 destroyed most of the buildings again. Both times there was plenty of water and the fires could have been stopped but the screens at the reservoirs were not replaced after cleaning and the pipes clogged with rocks and mud. As people were taken to the cemetery the firebell tolled the number of years of age of the deceased (the bell probably rang all day).

24. Site of the Soderling Assay Office: The Assay Office was located on the west side of Main Street. It was reported that Soderling went to Germany to learn the cyanide process and was an expert in his field. Soderling's first assay office was on the east side of Main Street which was burned down in 1892.



25. Wells Fargo Express Office: One shipment of gold by the Standard Mine amounted to around $500,000 and was guarded by six Wells Fargo messengers--two on horseback in front of the stage, two behind the stage, and two in the stage. The Wells Fargo box filled with bullion required two to three men to lift it on the stage. Nothing could be shipped exceeding $500 without an armed messenger. The stage was held up several times. The route of travel was from Bodie to Aurora, Nevada, through Wellington and Gardnerville to Carson City, where the bullion was delivered to the Carson City mint or shipped to San Francisco.

26. U. S. Land Office: The Land Office was conducted by Agent M. J. Cody, father of Ella Cain. Later served as the Power Company Office, store, and finally a boarding house.

Historical Note: Energy for the mills was first derived from steam generated by wood-fired boilers. When wood for fuel became scarce and uneconomical, Tom Legett, Superintendent of the Standard Mine, with J. S. Cain's backing, proceeded on his theory that electricity could be transmitted over wires from a distance. A hydroelectric plant was built 13 miles away on Green Creek above Bridgeport. The line was paralleled by a telephone line. When the day arrived to test the theory, word was flashed over the telephone line and the switch was thrown. The generators began to hum and the first motor to be operated over long distance power lines was initiated in Bodie. The Green Creek plant developed 6,600 volts and 350 horsepower. The news flashed around the world and from Rhodesia to Australia offers came to the engineers to build hydroelectric plants. Many of the original poles and lines still stand. The Standard Mine was the first mine to operate an electric hoist.

Turn left at the corner and proceed up Green Street and across Bodie Creek.

27. Schoolhouse: This building, constructed in 1879, was known as the Bon Ton Lodging House. "The first school was located two blocks up the street, but a tough who didn't want to go to school set fire to it and burned it down."

Return to Main Street.

28. The first building on your left is on the site of the Bodie House. Present building was last used as a morgue. Note caskets, etc., inside the building.

29. Miners' Union Hall: Constructed in 1878. Served as the center of much of the social life in Bodie; the annual 4th of July Grand Ball, the elegant masquerade ball on Washington's Birthday (when it invariably snowed), and the Christmas Party for young and old were held in this hall. The miners' union, Local 61, Western Federation of Miners, was organized December 22, 1877, one of the first organized unions in California.

30. Odd Fellows Hall: The Bodie Odd Fellows Lodge, No. 279, was instituted March 11, 1879, by the then Grand Master Brother Charles H. Randell. The lodge operated until December 26, 1919, when the lodge consolidated with Bishop Creek Lodge at Bishop. The lower floor was used by the Bodie Athletic Club.

31. Site of First Post Office.

Historical Note: The population of Bodie reached an estimated ten thousand people in 1878-1881 and peak of production in 1879-1880. An estimated 90-100 million dollars in gold and silver was taken from the mines. The majority of the population was the best of the mining-camp types, others the wildest and most desperate characters that ever infested a mining region.

Along the road ahead of you which leads to the site of Dog Town and Bridgeport stood a large foundry (the cannon in front of the Mono County Courthouse, Bridgeport, was cast in this foundry), warehouse, brewery, the Silver Hill Mine and South End Cyanide Plant, and a large hospital on the slope toward the cemeteries.

32. Return to and cross Green Street to the Bodie Store and Warehouse or Boone's Store. It served as a general store and warehouse carrying all types of merchandise. Boone was also a great horse fancier and owned the "Boone Stable and Livery Business". Note five gallon cans used as siding. Kerosene and gasoline was hauled to Bodie from Hawthorne and Carson City, Nevada, in these cans. They were cut open and used for siding and roofing. Corrugated iron was later used for roofing and mill buildings.

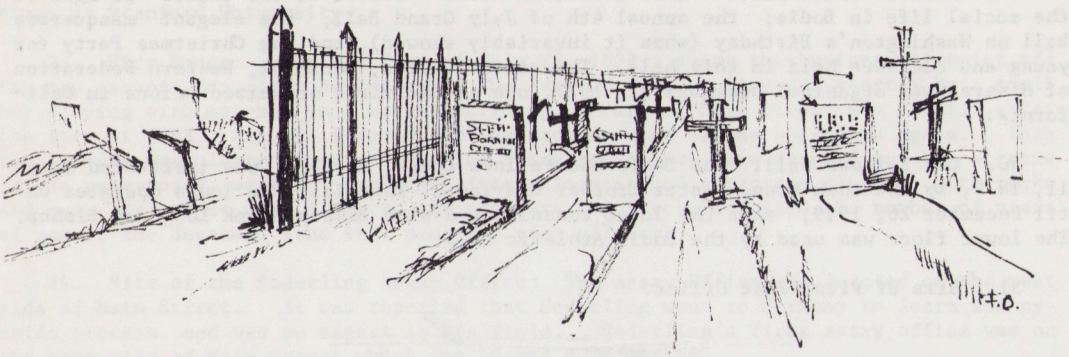
Proceed up Green Street.

33. On your left in the field was located a blacksmith shop and barn large enough to accommodate 100 horses. From this shop the blacksmith frame for welding and setting of large iron wagon tires was moved to Main Street and used for the hanging of DeRoach who murdered Johnny Treboar. An investigation into the death of DeRoach was made. The Justice of Peace Record states "Case dismissed, as the defendant was taken out and hanged by a mob".

34. Red Barn: Typical of the large barns used throughout Bodie.

35. David Victor Cain House: Constructed prior to 1879. Vic Cain was born in Carson City, Nevada, and lived in this house after he married Ella M. Cody in 1904.

36. Cemeteries: To your left across the sagebrush is Ward's Cemetery, the Masonic Cemetery, The Miners' Union Cemetery, and the Chinese Cemetery. Only those "accepted" as respectable could be buried inside the fences surrounding all but the



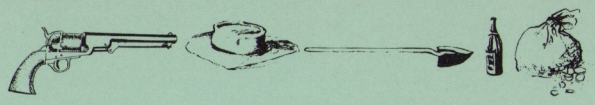
Chinese Cemetery. Others were buried in "Boot Hill" outside the fences, and in most cases without markers. William S. Bodey the discoverer of gold is buried without the gravestone which was carved for him. But that's a story you should read about. Bodey finally received recognition on October 5, 1957, when a large granite block was placed on his grave with a plaque dedicated by "E Clampus Vitus".

37. Ahead of you is what was known as Taylor Gulch and now Pearson Spring. This is probably the site of Bodey's cabin where William Bodey discovered gold in 1859 in company with three prospector companions--Doyle, Garroty and Black Taylor. In November of 1859 Bodey and Taylor set out for Monoville for supplies. On their return trip they were caught in a blizzard and became lost. Bodey's strength gave out and he perished. The following spring Taylor found his bones and buried them. He was later reburied in the Masonic Cemetery.

38. The road ahead of you goes north to Masonic, Sweetwater, and Wellington, Nevada, or south along Rough Creek to Aurora. The elevation of the peak to your right is 10,236 feet. (Make inquiries before attempting to travel over this road.)

"And now my comrades all are gone. Naught remains to toast, they have left me here in my misery, like some poor wandering ghost."

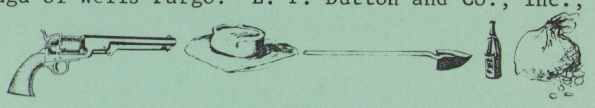
This completes the historic walk in old Bodie. We hope you enjoyed your visit to Bodie State Historic Park.



Source material for this leaflet and for those interested in more information and facts about the town of Bodie and its people. Only the first two publications are available.

Cain, Ella M.
1956 The Story of Bodie. Fearon Publishers, 2450 Fillmore St.,San Francisco.

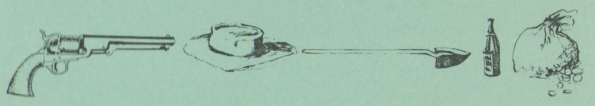
Beebe, Lucius and Clegg, Charles
1956 The Saga of Wells Fargo. E. P. Dutton and Co., Inc., New York.



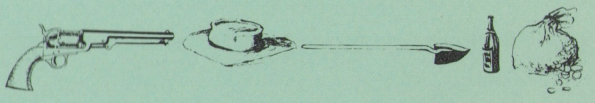
Billeb, E. W.
1959 Centennial of Bodie Mining District, Mono County, California, 1859-1959.

National Park Service
1963 Historic American Buildings Survey. National Park Service, Western Office, Division of Design and Construction, 1000 Geary Street, San Francisco. (Not available)

National Park Service
1959 The Mining Frontier. The National Survey of Historic Sites and Buildings. Edited by William C. Everhart, National Park Service, Region Four, San Francisco. (In process of publication.)



Parks are for people forever



PERSONAL NOTES:

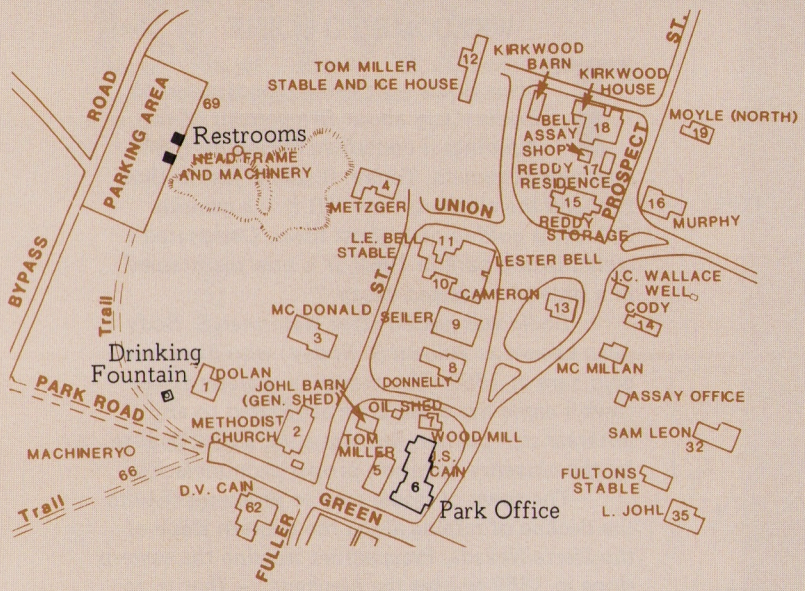
1988

Pg 13
Spence Gregory
Grandma Johnson

BODIE
STATE HISTORIC PARK

And now my comrades all are gone;
Naught remains to toast.
They have left me here in my misery,
Like some poor wandering ghost.

CALIFORNIA STATE PARK SYSTEM



The Old Methodist Church (2.) on the corner of Green and Fuller Streets.

A WALK THROUGH OLD BODIE

The following numbered paragraphs correspond to the numbered posts along the walk and to the numbers on the map.

1. DOLAN HOUSE. *The Dolan family produced two Mono County Sheriffs around the turn of the century. Later this was the home of Frank McDonell.*

2. *The old* METHODIST CHURCH *was erected in 1882. This is the only church still standing in Bodie, and the only Protestant church erected. E.J. Clinton of San Francisco restored the church and held the last service here in 1932. Since then, the interior has been badly vandalized, and the Ten Commandments painted on oilcloth which once hung behind the pulpit – (Thou shalt not steal) – has been stolen. The Catholic church on Wood Street, also built in 1882, burned down in 1928.*

3. McDONALD HOUSE. *Dan McDonald was injured in 1879 when two tons of dynamite (then still a recent invention) blew up the old Standard works. The house was later owned by the Burkham family. S.B. Burkham operated a store on Main Street in the 1880s and 1890s, and his son, Cecil, ran the first automobile stage out of Bodie to Hawthorne in 1912.*

4. METZGER HOUSE. *Henry Metzger, born in New York in 1860, came to Bodie in 1878 to work in the Standard Mill and was its foreman when it closed down about 1916. Two of his seven children were born in this house.*

View of Bodie from the Cemetery (68.) southwest of town.

5. MILLER HOUSE *(open to the public). Tom Miller worked for the Mono Lake Railway & Lumber Co. (the former Bodie & Benton Railroad) at Mono Mills, south of Mono Lake. Much of the Jeffrey pine lumber used in the construction of Bodie came from Mono Mills.*

6. A RESIDENCE OF JAMES STUART CAIN, *who arrived in Bodie when he was 25, entered the lumber business, and put barges on Mono Lake to transport timber to the Bodie mines. He expanded into wagon freighting and, with Thomas Holt, leased the Bodie Railroad and Lumber Company. He and Joe Maguire leased a block of ground from the Standard Mine and Mill and took out $90,000 in gold in 90 days. Standard would not renew the lease, but Cain eventually acquired the company through court action and became the town's principal property owner.*

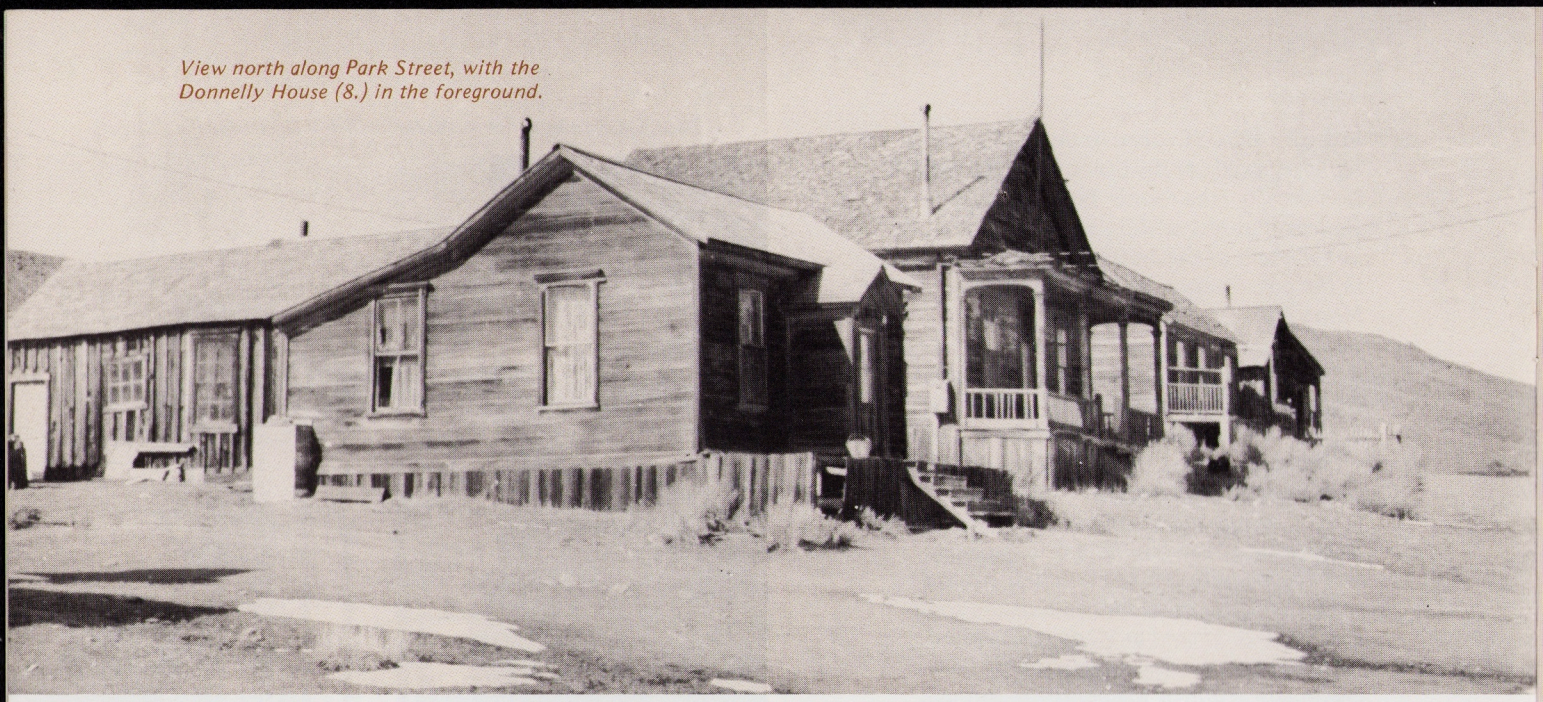
Turn left at Park Street.

7. *The small* SAWMILL *was used for cutting firewood. With snow as much as twenty feet deep, winds to a hundred miles an hour, and temperatures down to 30 or even 40 degrees below zero, it required plenty of firewood to keep Bodie's poorly constructed houses warm during the winter. The winter of 1878-1879 was especially severe, and Bodie residents, many of them newly arrived, were not adequately prepared. Many died of exposure, disease, or violence. Preparing for a Bodie winter was, and still is, a monumental task.*

8. DONNELLY HOUSE. *Charlie Donnelly was a butcher who married English artist Annie Pagdin. Later this house was occupied by E.W. Billeb and his wife Dolly, daughter of James S. and Martha Cain. Mr. Billeb was the last superintendent and manager of the old Bodie and Benton Railroad (later the Mono Lake Railway & Lumber Company). The garden in front of his house was the only green spot in town; Hops grown there were said to be the only green plants that could survive in Bodie.*

The J.S. Cain Residence (6.) at the corner of Green and Park Streets.

James S. and Martha Cain, married in Carson City, Nevada, September 17, 1879.



View north along Park Street, with the Donnelly House (8.) in the foreground.

9. SEILER HOUSE. *Seiler owned a saloon on the corner of Union and Main Streets.*

10. CAMERON HOUSE, *later a residence of Martha and James Stuart Cain.*

11. HOUSE OF LESTER E. BELL, *who was in charge of the cyanide plant built by Alex McCone and James Cain, then the largest such plant in the United States. The cyanide process of extracting gold was perfected in Bodie and enabled the working of otherwise worthless mine tailings for gold. Bell's son, Lester L. Bell, became an assayer for Bodie's mining companies.*

12. TOM MILLER BARN AND ICE HOUSE.

13. MENDOCINI HOUSE *was occupied by Annie Mendocini. Her father drove freight wagons from Aurora.*

14. HOME OF M.J. CODY, *U.S. Land Agent in 1885-86. His daughter Ella married David Victor Cain in 1904. Ella was a Bodie schoolteacher, and in the 1930s founded the Bodie Museum.*

15. HOUSE OF PAT REDDY. *Known throughout the West as an able criminal lawyer, the one armed Reddy built a considerable reputation on his ability to defend the criminal element, union members, and the underdog in general.*

16. MURPHY HOUSE.

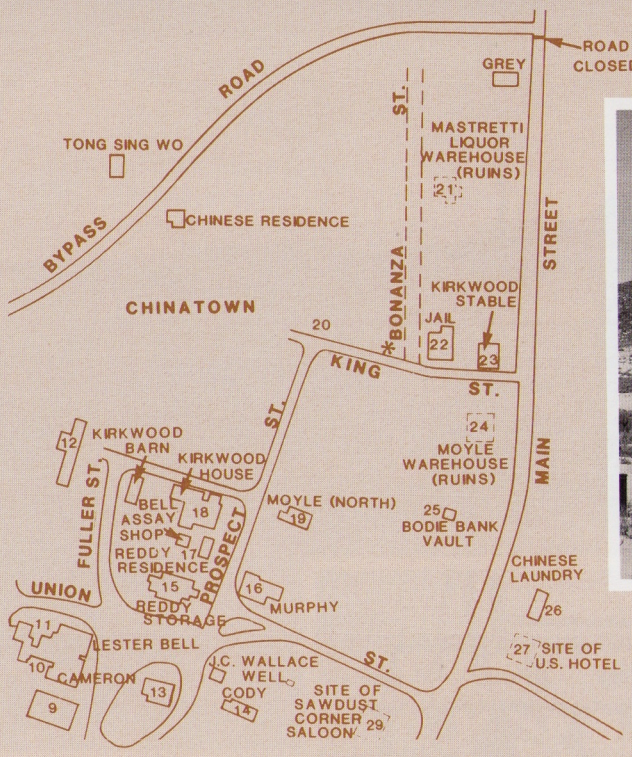
17. BOB BELL'S MACHINE SHOP. *Bob, son of Lester L. Bell, was born in Bodie and worked in its mines. In later years he helped stabilize and restore Bodie's buildings for the Department of Parks and Recreation.*

18. HOME OF STUART KIRKWOOD, *owner of the stables (site no. 23). This house was also occupied by E.L. Benedict, former manager of the Bodie Bank (site no. 25).*

19. MOYLE HOUSE. *The Moyle brothers had a business on Main Street.*

Continue on Prospect Street and on down the hill to King Street and the site of Bodie's once-large Chinatown.

20. CHINATOWN. *Bodie's Chinese residents – at one time, several hundred of them – lived in this part of town and maintained their separate customs and traditions. Woodframe buildings (some built over stone cellars) lined the narrow central street. A town within a town, the Chinese quarter offered*



The Town Jail (22.) left; the Stuart Kirkwood Livery Stable (23.) in the right foreground.

residents a full range of services including general stores, laundries, gambling halls, saloons, boarding houses, and even a Taoist temple. Opium parlors were open to Caucasian and Chinese alike. The main sources of income for the Chinese came from peddling vegetables, operating laundries, and cutting, hauling, and selling firewood.

Ahead of you are the sites of Bonanza Street, Maiden Lane, and Virgin Alley. The Beautiful Doll, Eleanor Dumont (alias Madame Mustache), Rosa May, Emma Goldsmith, Nellie Monroe, French Joe and other popular "ladies of the night" lived and worked here in a row of one-room cabins called "cribs."

21. MASTRETTI LIQUOR WAREHOUSE.

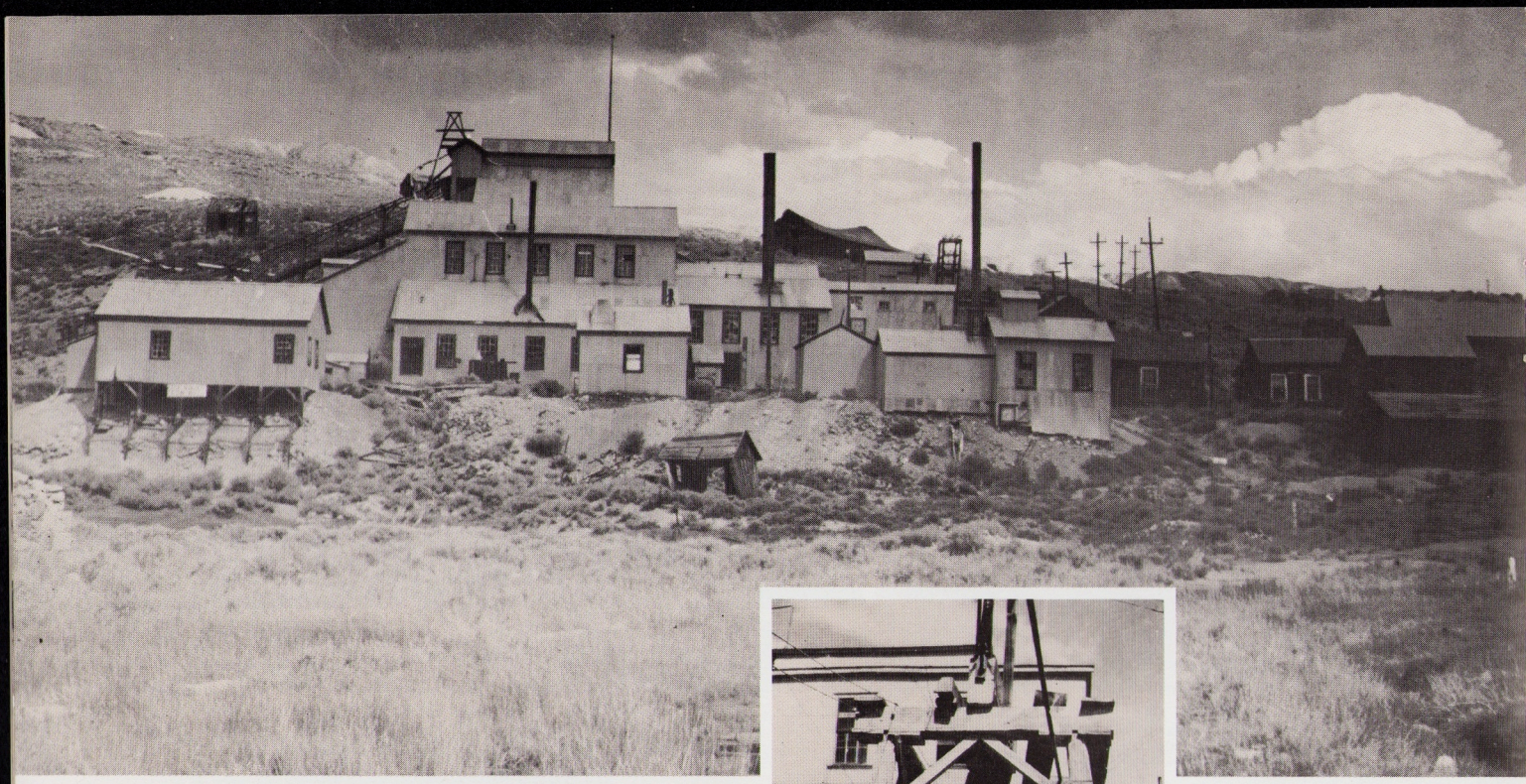
22. *The* TOWN JAIL *may not look like much now, but it had its day. Only one prisoner is known to have escaped. Bail for "guests" was $5. Joseph DeRoche was taken from here by the Bodie "601", a vigilante group, and hanged.*

23. *The* STUART KIRKWOOD LIVERY STABLE *and blacksmith shop. In 1879-1880, the population of Bodie soared to about ten thousand inhabitants. To feed, clothe, and otherwise supply this active, hardworking population required many wagons and literally hundreds of horses, mules, and other draft animals to haul in tons of goods daily.*

MAIN AND KING STREETS

From this point the road leads north through Bodie Creek Canyon and goes on seven miles to the California-Nevada border. It passes the Blanchard Toll House a couple of miles out of town. The junction with the road to Aurora, Nevada, where Mark Twain once lived while prospecting the Esmeralda outcroppings, is fourteen miles north of Bodie (make inquiries before attempting to travel over this road).

From here you can see the Standard Mine and Mill on the west slope of Bodie Bluff. Because the old mill buildings and surrounding area are extremely unsafe, they are closed to the public. The mine was known as the Bunker Hill Mine when it was registered in July 1861. It passed through several hands before being sold for



(above) The Standard Mill, east of Bodie.

Mill workers standing on top of a well in front of the Standard Mill.

$67,500 to four partners who changed the name and incorporated as the Standard Company in April 1877.

The Standard Mine yielded nearly $15 million over 25 years, and its success caused the 1878 rush to Bodie. In a year the population rose from about twenty to an estimated ten thousand miners, gamblers, and other entrepreneurs. The Mill was destroyed by fire in 1898, but was rebuilt the following year. While the boom lasted, some thirty companies produced $400,000 in bullion per month for an overall total estimated at $90 to $100 million.

The James S. Cain Company owned the Midnight Mine next to the Standard, and in 1915 it was proved in court that the management of the Standard Company had deliberately and fraudulently tapped the Midnight property. The damages awarded were so great that Cain took over the Standard property.

Hank Blanchard operated a lime kiln twelve miles from Bodie, in Mono Lake Basin about a mile and a half from the siding of the Bodie and Benton Railroad. Paiute Indians working at the kiln would haul the sacked lime to the siding and load it on flatcars for delivery at the Bodie terminal of the railroad, on the hill east of town; from there it was hauled to the Standard Company limehouse for use in milling and cyaniding gold and silver ores.

To the right of the mill was the residence of Theodore Hoover, brother of Herbert Hoover and general manager of the Standard Consolidated Mining Company. He later became director of the School of Mines at Stanford University.

Head down Main Street.

24. *Remains of the* MOYLE WAREHOUSE, *one of the large stone warehouses constructed to store supplies for the long, cold Bodie winters. Some of the stone buildings were built into excavations blasted out of the hillside, and rooms or chambers were formed out of the rubble. This warehouse was built in 1879 behind the Gilson and Barber General Store.*

25. *This is the site of the* BODIE BANK, *which James S. Cain bought from E.L. Benedict in 1890. The bank escaped the fire of 1892 but was destroyed in that of 1932. All that you see here are the remains of the vault. It was robbed on September 1, 1916, by four men who got away with $4,000 in money and jewelry.*

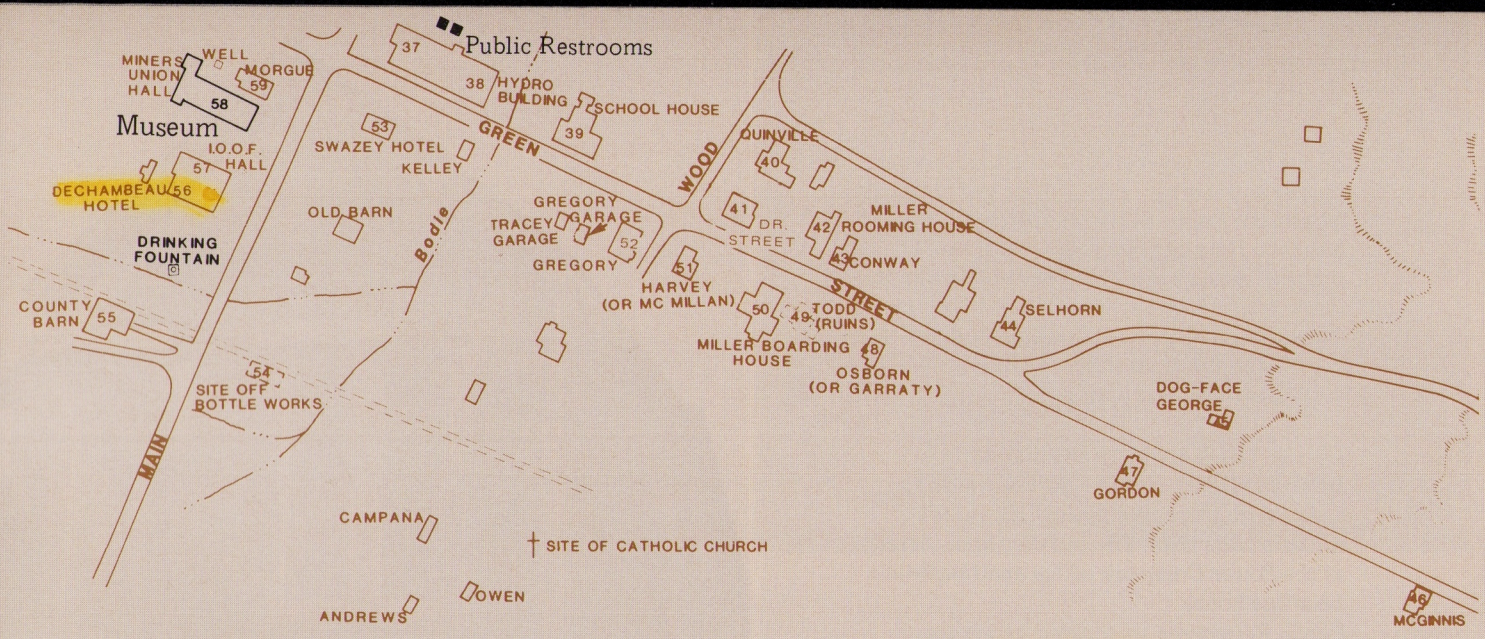
The other bank which Bodie boasted during its boom days, the Mono County Bank, was organized in 1877 by Timothy Hopkins, adopted son of Mark Hopkins of "Big Four" and Central Pacific fame. It operated until 1884, when it closed with all accounts settled in full.

26. *Across the street is the site of the* MASONIC HALL. *Bodie Lodge No. 252, F. & A. M., received its dispensation July 30, 1878, and its charter October 16, 1879, at which time there were 13 members. It reached its peak of 93 members in 1882 and passed from existence in 1918 when the remaining members voted to consolidate with Winnedumah Lodge No. 287 of Bishop. The building presently on this site was moved from Bonanza Street sometime after 1900. It was used as a laundry.*

27. *Site of the* U.S. HOTEL.

Main Street, once a solid mile of one and two-story frame buildings, is well described by this quote from the Saga of Wells Fargo:

> *"At the high noon of its great days there were 30 mines in operation in Bodie. . .and the saloons, pothouses, restaurants, gin mills, ale stoops, and allied and adjacent deadfalls averaged, according to the advertising columns in the Bodie* Standard, *something better than one to a mineshaft. Having dined at Stewarts Hotel, the Arlington, the Bodie House, Browns or. . .the Occidental (Site No. 28), Grand Central or Windsor, the workingman off duty was confronted by a bewildering choice of oases on which to lavish his patronage. He had his choice of Wagner's Corner, the Parole Saloon, the Rifle Club, the Cabinet, the Senate, the Commercial, the Champion, Peters and Aldriges, the Gymnasium, Mark's Saloon, the Sawdust Corner (Site No. 29), or the Bonanza. At all of these, the products of the town's three breweries – the Bodie, the Pioneer, the Pat Fahey's – were the favored chasers.*
>
> *". . .There was almost sure to be a company of* East Lynne *or* Ten Nights in a Bar Room, *both prime favorites, performing at the Miner's Union Hall. And, after the show, at an hour when life was really in order, the prudent reveler could save his final and best thirst of the evening to be dissipated at one or both of the town's ranking resorts of quality and fashion: The Maison Doree Restaurant, where the best quail in aspic in*



39. *The* SCHOOLHOUSE *building, built in 1879, was originally the Bon Ton Lodging House. The first school, located two blocks up the street, was burned down by an early-day juvenile delinquent. Belle Moore, wife of Ben Butler, was Bodie's first schoolteacher.*

40. QUINVILLE HOUSE.

41. DR. STREET'S HOUSE.

42. MILLER ROOMING HOUSE. *Mrs. Miller also had the boarding house across the street, site no. 50.*

43. CONWAY HOUSE. *In the 1880s the Conways ran freight wagons between Bodie and Carson City, Nevada, the nearest railhead. With loaded wagons it was an eight to ten day round trip. Bob Conway was one of the few residents left in Bodie after the outbreak of World War II.*

44. SELHORN HOUSE.

45. DOG FACE GEORGE'S HOUSE.

46. McINNIS HOUSE.

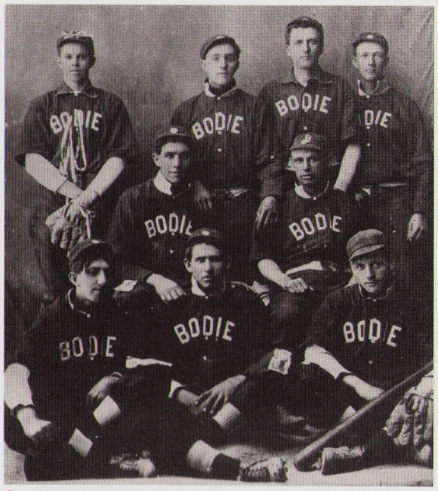
47. GORDON HOUSE.

48. GARRATY HOUSE.

49. *The* JIM TODD HOUSE *collapsed during the winter of 1973-74.*

50. MRS. MILLER'S *(other)* BOARDING HOUSE.

51. McMILLAN HOUSE. *A.E. McMillan was secretary of the Bodie Miners' Union in 1885. His son Dan was a one-armed sheriff, and manager of the Bodie baseball team after the turn of the century.*



Bodie baseball team.

View north along Main Street. Dechambeau Hotel and Post Office. I.O.O.F. Hall. Bodie Miners' Union Hall. Undertaker.

52. GREGORY HOUSE. *Nathan Gregory operated a cattle ranch between Bodie and Aurora before 1900. His son Spence, one of Bodie's last residents, lived here for years as a retired mining engineer.*

Return to Main Street and turn left.

53. *The* SWAZEY HOTEL *also housed at various times a clothing store and a casino.*

54. *Site of* BOTTLE WORKS, *operated by the Moyle family.*

55. COUNTY BARN. *Last used to store county road maintenance equipment.*

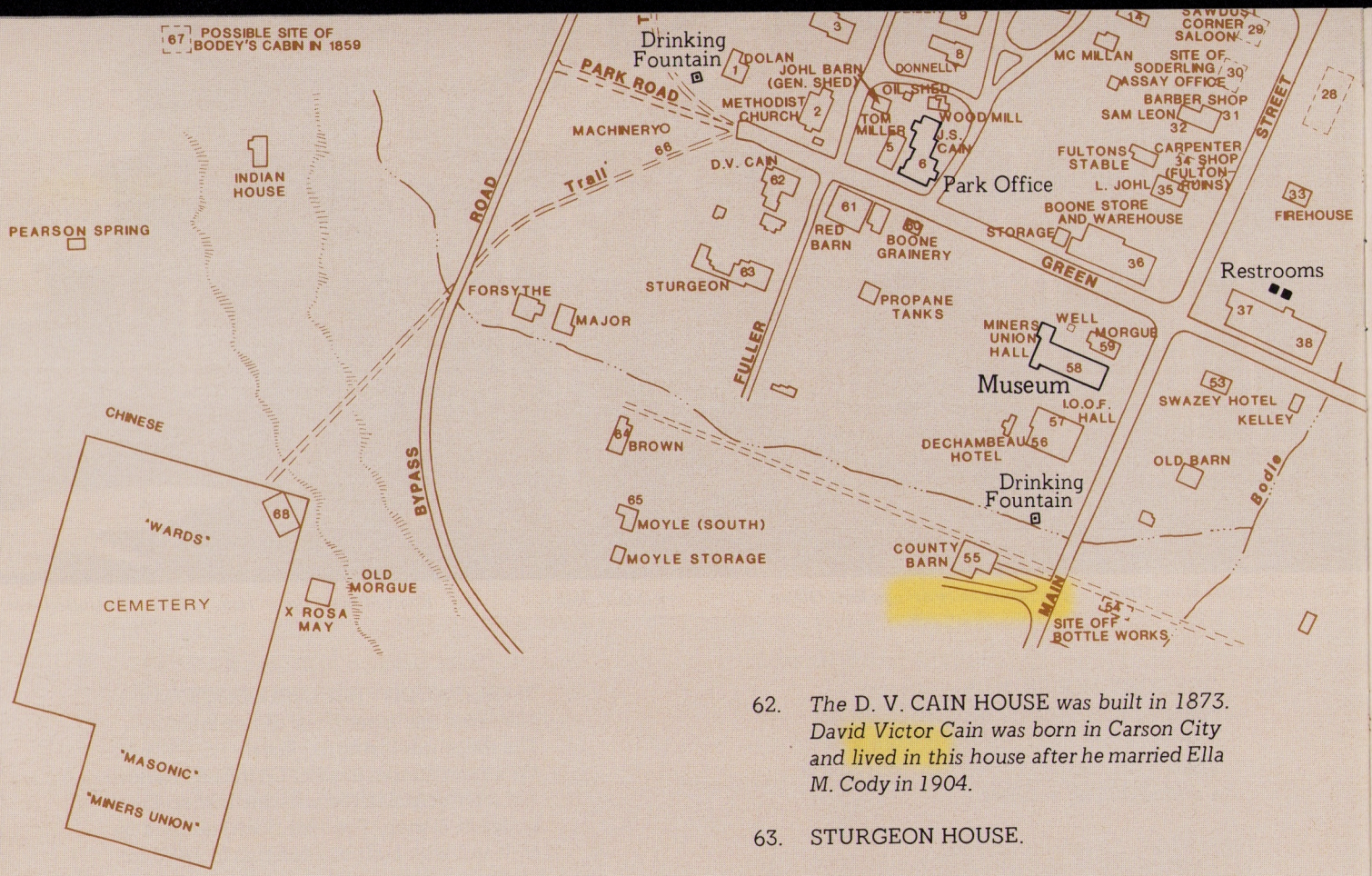
56. *The* POSTOFFICE *moved here in 1879 from Silas Smith's store on northeast Main Street where it had been located since 1877. This building was erected by Postmaster George Putnam. It served as Grandma Johnson's rooming house and later as the Dechambeau Hotel. To the south stood a large foundry where the cannon in front of the Mono County Courthouse in Bridgeport was cast. Further south stood a warehouse, a brewery, the Silver Hill Mine, the South End Cyanide Plant, and a large hospital on the slope towards the cemeteries.*

57. *The Bodie* ODD FELLOWS LODGE, *No. 279, used the upper floor of this building. The lodge was instituted March 11, 1878 by the Grand Master Brother Charles H. Rendell and later consolidated with the Bishop Creek Lodge at Bishop. The first floor was used by H. Ward, who built the building in 1880 for his undertaking business. It was also used by the Bodie Athletic Club.*

58. *The* MINERS' UNION HALL, *built in 1878, was an important place in the social life of Bodie. The annual Fourth of July Grand Ball, the elegant masquerade ball on Washington's Birthday (when it invariably snowed), and Christmas party for young and old were held here. The Miners' Union Local 61, Western Federation of Miners, was organized December 22, 1877, and was one of the first organized unions in California. The building now houses a museum.*

59. *This building was last used as a* MORGUE. *Note the caskets inside.*

Turn left, up Green Street.



In the field to your left there was once a blacksmith shop and a barn large enough to accommodate a hundred horses. A big scaffold, normally used for raising wagons and setting large iron wagon tires, was taken from this shop to the intersection of Main and Lowe Streets and used for the lynching of Joseph DeRoche, who reportedly murdered Johnny Treloar. An investigation into DeRoche's death was made, and the justice of the peace's record states, "Case dismissed, as the defendant was taken out and hanged by a mob."

60. SADDLE ROOM.

61. *This old red* BARN *is typical of the large barns once used throughout Bodie.*

62. *The* D. V. CAIN HOUSE *was built in 1873. David Victor Cain was born in Carson City and lived in this house after he married Ella M. Cody in 1904.*

63. STURGEON HOUSE.

64. BROWN HOUSE. *William L. Brown worked for the Treadwell-Yukon mining company around 1930 for $1.00 per day. In the boom times of the nineteenth century, when the Bodie Miners' Union was active, miners' pay had been $4.00 per day.*

65. MOYLE HOUSE. *The Moyle brothers had a store on north Main Street. Later George Moyle, a member of Bodie's baseball team, operated a bottling plant on south Main.*

Return to Green Street

66. *The* MACHINERY *in the field west of the D.V. Cain House belonged either to the Bodie hydro-power plant, once located 13 miles west on Green Creek, or to a sister plant just to the south on Mill Creek. The remains of one of the world's first long-distance power facilities include a generator and a Pelton wheel.*

67. *Ahead (west) is* PEARSON SPRINGS, *once known as Taylor Gulch. This may have been the site of the cabin in which W.S. Body was living when he discovered gold in 1859 in company with three prospector companions. More likely, however, Body's cabin was on the east side of Bodie Bluff where placer gold was discovered in Taylor Gulch on the east side of Silver Hill. In late November of 1859, Body and Black Taylor were returning from Monoville with supplies when they became lost in a blizzard. Body's strength gave out and he died. The following spring Taylor found Body's remains and buried them. They were later reburied in the Masonic Cemetery. Later, during the boom years, this spot was renamed for the Pearson brothers, who bottled soda water here.*

68. *To your left across the sagebrush are* WARD'S CEMETERY, *the* MASONIC CEMETERY, *the* MINERS' UNION CEMETERY, *and the* CHINESE CEMETERY. *Only those accepted as respectable were buried inside the fences. Others were buried in "Boot Hill" outside the fences, and in most cases without markers. Waterman S. Body, the founder of the town, is buried without the gravestone that was carved for him. . .but that's another story! Body finally received recognition on October 5, 1957, when a large granite block was placed on his grave with a plaque dedicated by E. Clampus Vitus.*

69. *The large wooden structure east of the parking lot is called a* HEAD FRAME. *(although it is sometimes referred to as a "gallows frame"). It was the headframe for the hoisting works of the Red Cloud Mine and formerly stood over the ridge southeast of town. Beneath it are the Red Cloud's steam hoist and air compressor.*

This completes your walk through Old Bodie. We hope you have enjoyed your visit!

PUBLIC RESTROOMS *are located between the gallows frame and the parking lot.*

The road uphill to the northwest is the old Geiger Grade to Masonic and Bridgeport. Make inquiries before attempting to travel this road.

The Post Office (in the Reading Store) March 1911.

Two unidentified miners pose by their 'dig'.

Stage coaches drawn up in front of the Grand Central Hotel on Main Street in 1880.

WHEN YOU VISIT

Bodie State Historic Park is best visited during the summer. At other times the weather is unpredictable. Off-season visitors are cautioned to check at the Mono County Sheriff's office in Bridgeport for road and weather conditions before making the trip. Roads are often difficult; trailers are not advised. Over-snow equipment (snowmobiles, skis, snow shoes, etc.) may be required to reach the park during the winter months.

The Park is open year-round; 9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. in the summer months, and 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. the rest of the year. An entrance fee is charged year-round.

For more information about Bodie SHP you may contact the park either by writing to:

BODIE STATE HISTORIC PARK
Post Office Box 515
Bridgeport, California 93517

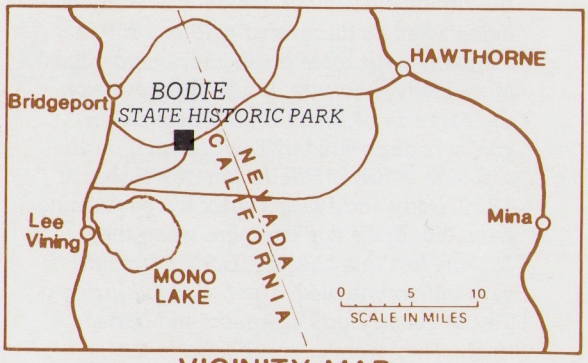
or by calling the park directly at:
(619) 647-6445

PLEASE HELP US

- DON'T TOUCH ANYTHING: *leave every rock and rusty can in place for our grandchildren to see.*
- WATCH OUT: *this is a real ghost town; splinters, nails and broken glass are everywhere.*
- DON'T SMOKE, *except in the parking lot.*
- *The Mill Area is hazardous; please stay out.*
- *Unless otherwise noted, all buildings are closed to the public.*

Department of Parks & Recreation

State of California – The Resources Agency
P.O. Box 942896 Sacramento, CA 94296-0838



VICINITY MAP

The Friends of Bodie is a group dedicated to the preservation of the gold mining ghost town of Bodie. It is a chapter of the Tahoe-Sierra State Parks Association. This is a volunteer, non-profit organization which helps preserve and interpret state parks in the Sierra District of the State Department of Parks and Recreation.

In 1962 Bodie became a state historic park. This did not automatically insure all structures and artifacts would be properly preserved. Within the State Park System Bodie must compete with other parks for funding and priority projects. Likewise, the Department of Parks and Recreation must compete with all other state agencies for limited amounts of funding.

The Friends of Bodie can help raise funds and provide volunteer support to insure that Bodie is properly preserved.

Financial support and volunteer workers are vital in preserving Bodie. Should you wish to participate in this effort please contact:

The Friends of Bodie
Post Office Box 515
Bridgeport, CA 93517

GEORGE DEUKMEJIAN
Governor

GORDON K. VAN VLECK
Secretary for Resources

HENRY R. AGONIA
Director, Dept. of Parks and Recreation

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Archaeologist explores historic site

11-12-1987

Mills provided Bodie with thousands of cords of wood

by Jeff Irons

In the late 1800s, when the mining town of Bodie was booming with gold rush excitement and bustling with a population of 8,000 to 10,000 people, there was a need for lumber to house and heat the gold-seekers and their families. Unfortunately, there was no wood near the town, a fact which necessitated looking to the vast stands of Jeffrey pine that laid to the south of the town beyond Mono Lake.

Millions of board feet of lumber were needed to construct the houses, stores, schools and churches in the town, and to shore up the tunnels and shafts of Bodie's mines. In order to turn the trees into working lumber, mills were built to shape the raw pine into the boards and shingles needed to create shelters for Bodie's thriving population.

One of the most important of the sawmills, Mono Mills, was erected in 1881 near the southern shore of Mono Lake. Although it ceased operation in 1917, the mill's history lingers to this day.

The mill site, located just off State Highway 120 about 10 miles east of U.S. 395, may appear to the casual observer as little more than rotting timber and old bricks — but to Forest Service archaeologist William Sawyer, the site is as lively as it was a century ago.

"In its heyday, the mill was capable of producing 80,000 feet of cut lumber every 10 hours."

Archaeologist William Sawyer

Sawyer, in his sixth season with Inyo National Forest, spends his summer and fall weekends exploring the Mono Mills site, trying to piece together just exactly who the people were that worked at the mill and inhabited the adjacent town.

"I knew there needed to be more work done here because it is going to vanish rapidly," the 31-year-old Sawyer said, "so I took it upon myself to do an independent research project on the weekends aside from my Forest Service work."

Walking through the weathered timbers and rusting steel, Sawyer recently talked about the mill, its history and some of the problems he has encountered in his search for more clues about the site.

"The mill originally owned about 23,000 acres in the surrounding area," Sawyer explained, "but only 10,000 acres was logged.

"A narrow gauge railroad ran south from here about three miles. They loaded the logs on the railroad cars and brought them here to be cut up."

According to Sawyer, the logs were pushed off the cars down a steep hill into the ravine where the mill sat. After the logs were turned into boards, they were transported by the Bodie Railway and Lumber Co. 31 miles around the east end of Mono Lake and up the steep grade to Bodie.

"In its first full year of operation in 1882, the railroad delivered five million board feet of lumber and 27,000 cords of wood to Bodie," Sawyer said. "In its heyday, the mill was capable of producing 80,000 feet of cut lumber every 10 hours."

After the mines in Bodie failed, the mill continued to operate, but steadily declined according to Sawyer. In 1917 after 35 years of operation, the mill shut down and its owners declared bankruptcy.

Sawyer said that not much literature exists about the mill site, and although details are sketchy, he does know that several hundred people lived and worked at the site. He said he had heard there were people still living in Benton who had worked at the mill and on the railway, and he hoped he could find someone who could relate their experiences. Sawyer can be contacted in care of the Mono Ranger District in Lee Vining.

"There were 25 men working in the mill and about 200 were used in cutting timber and hauling logs. Also, there was a sizable Chinese population," he said. "The town site near the mill had 30 buildings including a blacksmith shop, general store, two boarding houses, a commisary with a saloon, and private residences. My surveys have confirmed at least that.

"It's a 10,000-acre complex, so I'm just going to slowly test sites throughout the complex so I can reconstruct subsistence patterns and ethnicity," he said.

In addition to the American and Chinese that inhabited the area, Sawyer says he has found evidence of a Paiute Indian habitation site.

"I found Paiute artifacts in some of the old cabins out in the woods, but I don't know whether or not the Paiutes actually lived there, or if the artifacts were collected by loggers as souvenirs. History books do say that Indian labor worked on the railway as linemen during the summer months."

Most of what Sawyer has learned about Mono Mills has come from his weekends of carefully scouring the historical site for artifacts and relics of bygone days. Working under a use permit from the Forest Service, Sawyer has collected bottles, pottery and other items from the area which help to paint a picture of who the people were who lived there. He is also looking for a more unusual source of historical information, an old outhouse which he has seen in an old photo of the mill.

"It's out there somewhere," Sawyer said.

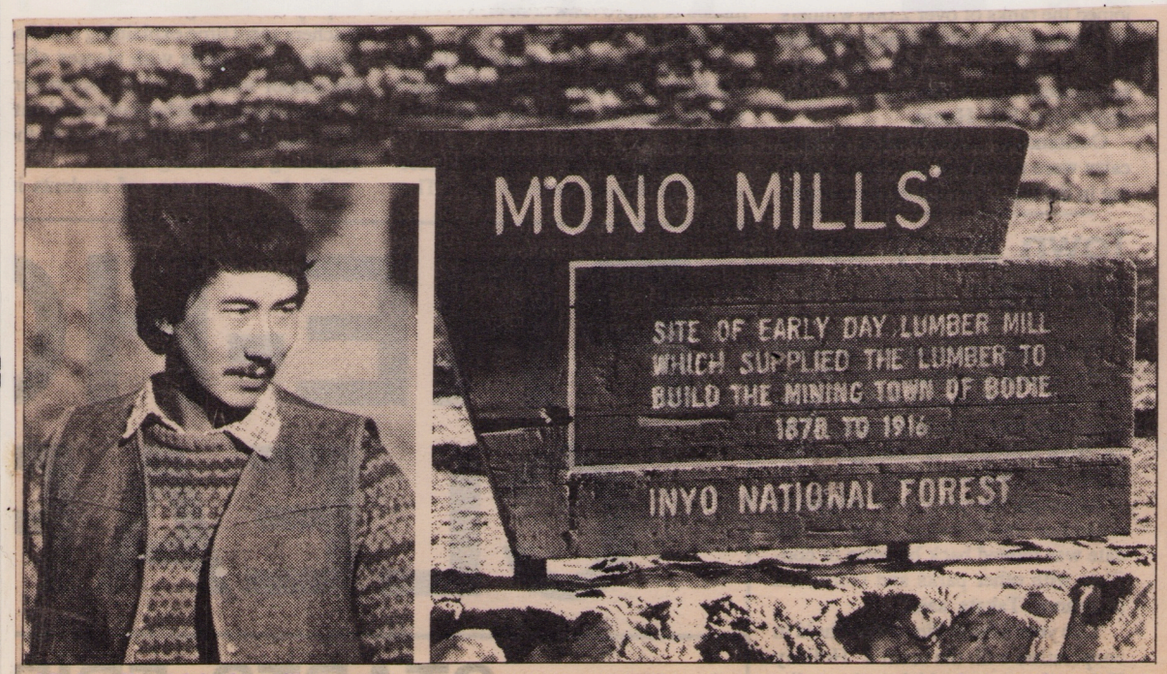
If he finds it, Sawyer said it could reveal what the people ate and any diseases or internal problems they might have had.

Sawyer has worked in contract archaeology for nine years, mainly in Southern California. He has worked on everything from pre-historic sites to excavation and survey work. Currently, he is completing work on his master's degree in archaeology at Long Beach State University.

"I decided to make the switch from pre-historic work to historic because I think historic is immensely more interesting," he said. "Prehistoric archaeology is heavily based on theory, especially the further you go back in time. This is a little more tangible."

Sawyer said he will continue to research the area for several more summers.

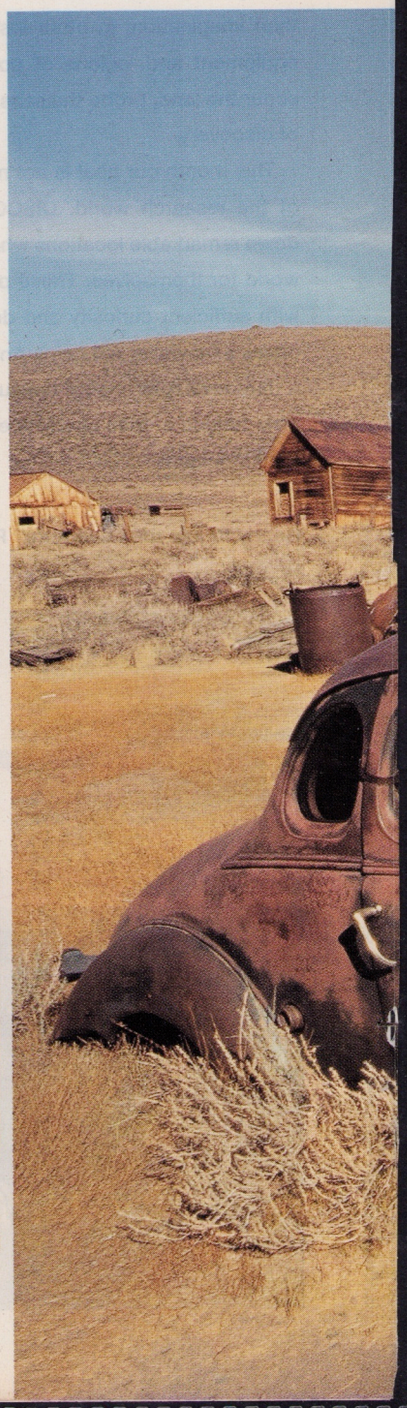
"There's quite a bit to deal with," he said.



Mining the historic mill: Forest Service archaeologist William Sawyer, inset, has spent several summers exploring the Mono Mills site off State Highway 120.

The Life of a

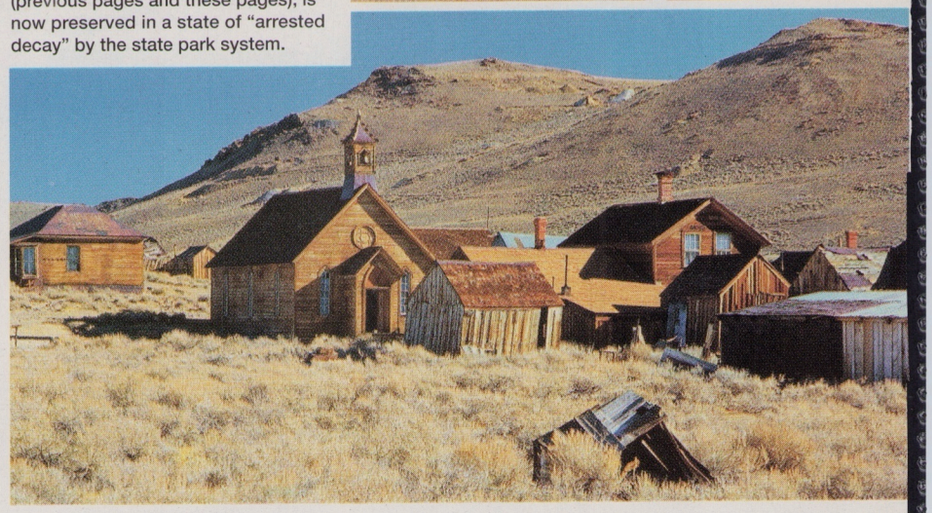
Gaze into one of the ramshackle buildings in Bodie, California, and you might see dust-covered furniture, an old muffin pan, rusty tins, and broken kerosene lamps. Or you might see a fully stocked general store with original wooden boxes and shelves with tin cans. The old gold-mining town, once bustling with saloons, brothels, gambling halls, and even opium dens, is now a ghost town, probably the most famous one in America. But it is much more than that. According to cultural geographer Dydia DeLyser of Louisiana State University, ghost towns, like the ruins of Pompeii, help people understand the past. "When people see Bodie," DeLyser says, "it's very powerful. They relate to the ideas the movies convey about the Old West, about the pioneering spirit of Americans, and read those into Bodie's landscape. By looking on the tarnished remains of the past, they feel they're experiencing that past."



Ghost Town

People may abandon a town, but something of them remains—and then there are those things that go bump in the night.

Abandoned for half a century, the mining town of Bodie, California (previous pages and these pages), is now preserved in a state of "arrested decay" by the state park system.



Nestled in the eastern foothills of the Sierra Nevada in a sagebrush-covered valley, Bodie was not even a dot on anyone's map until the 1870s, when gold diggers thronged the town in hopes of turning up instant wealth. Soon 30 mines were churning out gold nuggets by the bucketful, while the Standard Company mill, one of the first electrified plants in America, extracted further traces of the precious metal by chemical processing. In the first stage, workers washed ground-up ore over copper sheets clad with gold-grabbing mercury; then they scraped the gold-mercury amalgam off the boards, heated the mixture to release and condense the mercury, and poured the melted gold into molds for bars of bullion. In a second stage devised to obtain any remaining gold and silver particles, the ore, now the consistency of sand, was soaked in watered-down potassium cyanide, which drew the metals out into a form that could be trapped by trays filled with zinc shavings. By the 1940s the gold had been exhausted, the last mine closed. Today only 170 structures remain, about 20 percent of the number that stood in the 1870s, when Bodie had, some folks estimate, up to 8,000 inhabitants.

When the California State Parks Department took over Bodie in 1962, it initiated a program of "arrested decay," maintaining the dilapidated structures just as they appeared at the time of acquisition. According to Charley Spiller, a Bodie maintenance mechanic, the greatest enemies of preservation are wind, which can gust up to 100 miles an hour on nearby mountains, and snow, which averages 13 feet a year. "When the roofs fail or the windows fail, then the snow gets in and sits and soaks into the floors, and then the floors deteriorate," he says. Currently a team of three or four workers spend six months of each year shoring up walls, repairing roofs, and replacing smashed windows—a task that can eat up as much as half a million dollars for three years' work. Spiller and his team rebuild walls using pine similar to the native Jeffrey pine that settlers originally used. Without constant attention, most houses would disintegrate into splinters, he adds. "Some of the other towns around here that have been left alone—they're gone. In 50 years there'd be very little left but the foundations."

While the staff works to preserve the site's haunting, desolate look, a rich tapestry of life thrives in the remnants of the town. California ground squirrels tunnel into the shrub-covered earth, feeding on meadow grass and bitterbrush. Coyotes—and from time to time a mountain lion, bobcat, or bear—amble through the town. As people left their homes in Bodie and no one else moved in, the houses became havens for species that thrive in the void, such as deer mice, snakes, lizards, and the red-shafted flicker, a kind of woodpecker that punches holes for its nests in the buildings. Trillions of microbes live in the soil, some of which can consume the toxic mercury and cyanide by-products of mining. Last year microbial ecologist Noah Fierer, now at the University of Colorado at Boulder, sampled bacterial diversity in 98 different soils across North and South America. By analyzing variation in a specific bacterial gene in his samples—the greater the variability, the higher the variety of species—Fierer found that deserts contained up to twice as many bacterial species, roughly 10,000 per 10 square meters, as did acidic rain forest soils. The deserts of the American West, where thousands of ghost towns with names like Bodie, Tomboy, and Paria stand, are therefore paradoxically riddled with life.

But it is the life that left Bodie that most interests the tourists who visit. "Ghost towns like Bodie," DeLyser explains, "are a powerful draw because they are perceived as authentic—actual abandoned towns presented more or less as they were left, and therefore as they once were." DeLyser has conducted ethnographic research on Bodie for 15 years and worked at the town for 10 summers. She says that visitors scrutinize the artifacts and try to determine their authenticity, asking questions like "Was all this stuff really just left here?" or "Was it all set up to make it look like a ghost town?" It would be a mistake, DeLyser says, for anyone to think, for instance, that the plates on the table or other items at Bodie were left behind in a kind of Pompeiian rush to escape. In fact, though all the artifacts are original to the town, a lot of them were arranged by staff members. (The park's staff is now prohibited from moving items or even disturbing the dust that has built up over the years.) Bodie remains a preserved piece of the Old West, not entirely authentic but close enough to excite the imagination of everyone who has an image of the pioneer, the gold miner, or the gunslinger in his or her head. As DeLyser puts it, a ghost town like Bodie allows people to experience the past—at least "the past as they imagine it."

Josie Glausiusz and Jane Bosveld

PAGES 40–41, LEFT: GALEN ROWELL/CORBIS; RIGHT: © MATTHIAS KULKA. OPPOSITE, TOP: ROBERT HOLMES/CORBIS; BOTTOM: © MATTHIAS KULKA. THIS PAGE: © MATTHIAS KULKA

How to Chase a Ghost

Bodie is just one of hundreds of ghost towns scattered across the United States, although none is lavished with as much care as Bodie is. Many ghost towns in the West are, like Bodie, relics from bursts of mining activity; others are towns that have dwindled away as residents headed for jobs in cities.

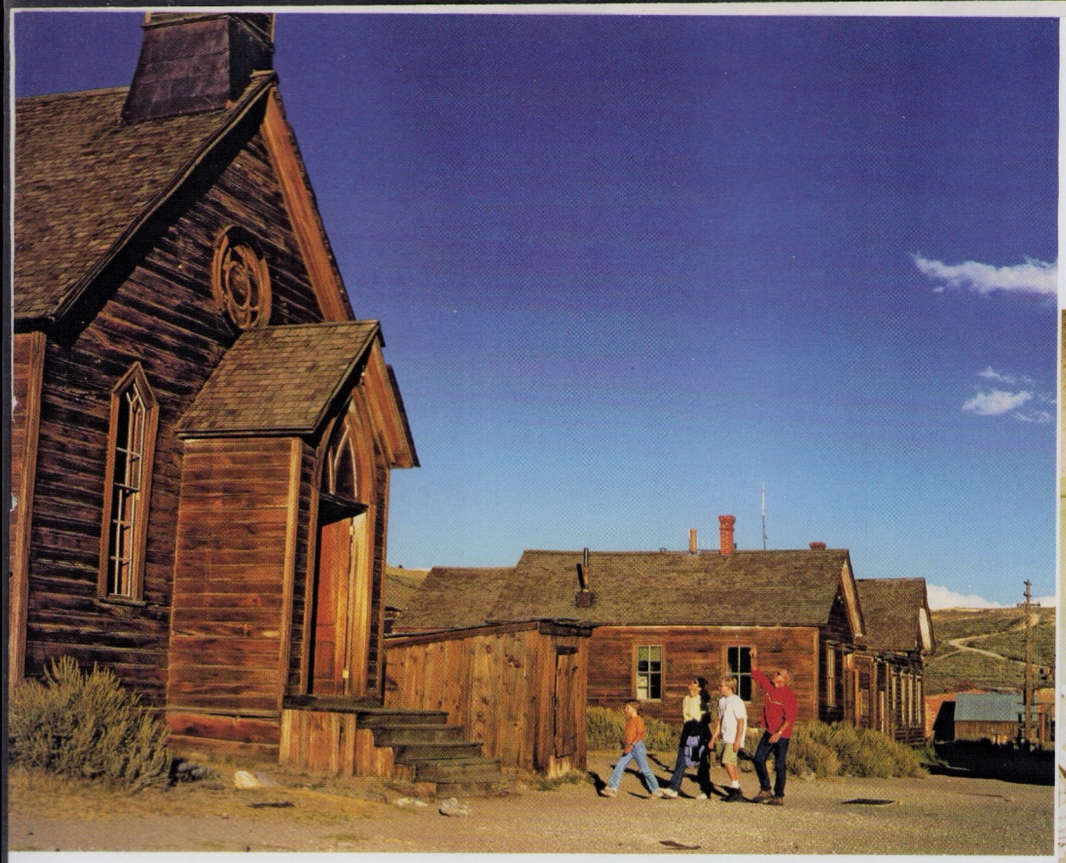
For more information on Bodie, visit these Web sites: **www.Bodie.com, www.parks.ca.gov/bodie,** and **www.bodiehistory.com**. The park is open year-round, but access in the winter is sometimes possible only by snowmobile. In winter the temperature can dip to nearly zero, and even summer days can be chilly enough to require a sweater and light jacket. To learn about visiting nearby remnants of the unrestored Bodie-era towns Masonic and Benton Hot Springs, see **www.ghosttown.info/ca/index.html**.

To find other ghost towns, visit the following Web sites, which are managed by ghost-town aficionados. The towns listed on these sites vary from clusters of abandoned buildings to simple stone markers indicating that a town once thrived on a now-vacant spot.

United States Ghost Towns
There may be a ghost town closer than you think. Click on a state in this interactive map to get a list of such towns with descriptions and sometimes photos of what is left to see, along wth location information.
www.ghosttowns.com/ghosttownsusa.html

Ghost Town USA
This site offers a Ghost Towner Code of Ethics (tread carefully) and a Ghost Town of the Month. Included are some towns that rose and fell in a matter of decades.
freepages.history.rootsweb.com/~gtusa/usa.htm

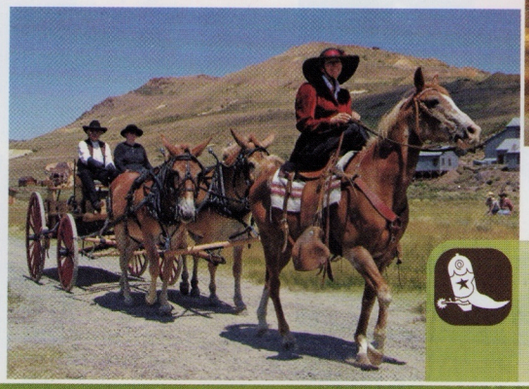
Coloma Ghost Town Archaeological Field School
Help document the physical structures and social relationships of the ghost town of Coloma in the Garnet Mountains of western Montana. Unlike most boom-era mining towns, Coloma was known for its library and school, not its bars and brothels. The field school, which is part of the University of Montana's anthropology department, runs this year from May 26 to June 20. You must apply before May 18. There is a $775 lab fee plus tuition costs, which vary. For more information: **www.cas.umt.edu/mtcoloma/default.htm**. To apply, contact coordinators Mark Timmons (mark.timmons@umontana.edu) or Kelly Dixon (kelly.dixon@mso.umt.edu).



bodie

Bodie State Historic Park is preserved in a state of "arrested decay," so keep an eye out for spirits roaming the once-wild streets of this genuine gold-mining ghost town. There are 170 structures still standing from over 120 years ago. From 1877 to 1888, Bodie had more than 10,000 residents (that's larger than Mammoth Lakes). More than $35 million was produced in gold and silver and now Bodie is the largest unrestored ghost town in the West. Bodie is open to visitors year-round.

Where is Bodie? The road to Bodie (state route 270) is located seven miles south of Bridgeport on US Hwy 395, approximately one hour north of Mammoth Lakes. Follow the road for 13 miles to reach Bodie (the last three miles are unpaved). Bodie information: 760-647-6445



GO BACK IN TIME

Friends of Bodie Days (August) is fun for kids to see what the streets looked like filled with people, some dressed in costumes from the old West. Tours of the Bodie Standard Mill are held weekends in summer.

2012

CHURCH AT BODIE © BILL McCHESNEY / KITCHEN © PHOTOS.COM / MAIN STREET BODIE © ISTOCK / FRIENDS OF BODIE RIDER AND WAGON © KEN KARAGOZIAN

bodie

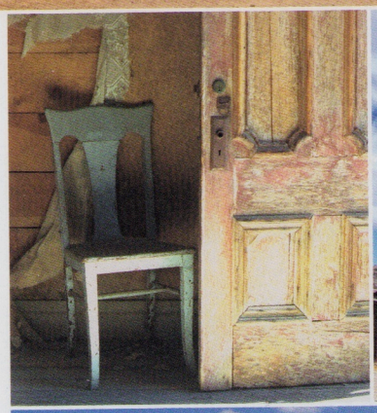
The West's largest un-restored, best-preserved ghost town.

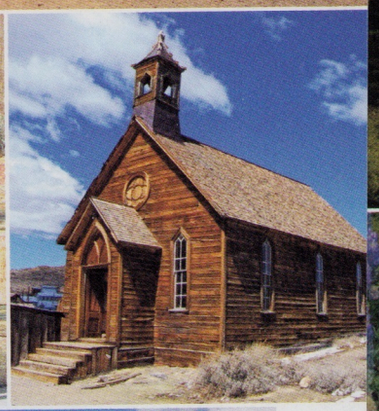
BODIE STATE HISTORIC PARK – The gold mining days of California are a distinct memory on Bodie's dirt streets and 170 relic buildings, which have been abandoned for decades. From 1877 to 1888, Bodie was a bustling town with more than 10,000 residents and produced more than $35 million in gold and silver.

SUPERSTITIOUS? – Even if you're not, be sure to leave every nail, rock and stick exactly as you see it. Remorseful visitors have reported experiencing a string of bad luck events after helping themselves to Bodie "souvenirs"!

HOW TO GET TO BODIE – Bodie is located 13 miles off US 395 (last three miles are unpaved) south of Bridgeport on State Route 270. The public is welcome to explore, photograph and relive the past during daylight hours, year-round. (Entrance fee; 760-647-6445.)

MUSEUM TOUR TIP – Free tours of the interior of the Stamp Mill are offered daily throughout the summer months. Check in at the Museum.





2013

MAIN EVENTS

AUGUST 10: FRIENDS OF BODIE DAYS
Fun for kids to see what Bodie's streets look like filled with horses, wagons, and people dressed in Old West attire.

MAY – OCTOBER: PHOTOGRAPHER DAYS
Every third Saturday, enter the Park at sunrise and snap shots until closing time. Register at BodieFoundation.org or call 760-647-6564.

DATES/EVENTS SUBJECT TO CHANGE. FOR YOUR OWN MONO COUNTY WALL CALENDAR, VISIT MONOCOUNTY.ORG

BODIE STREET © MOOSE PETERSON / BODIE DOOR AND CHAIR © JAMES KOHS / BODIE CHURCH © ALEKOS McKEE
BODIE LEANING BUILDING © ALEKOS McKEE / FRIENDS OF BODIE PARADE © MONO COUNTY TOURISM

VOTED TOP TEN lonely planet BEST U.S. DESTINATION 2013

bodie

The West's largest un-restored, best-preserved ghost town.

BODIE STATE HISTORIC PARK – The memory of California's wild gold mining days comes alive on Bodie's long-abandoned dirt streets with 170 of the town's relic buildings, preserved in a state of "arrested decay." From 1877 to 1888, Bodie was a bustling town with more than 10,000 residents and produced more than $35 million in gold and silver.

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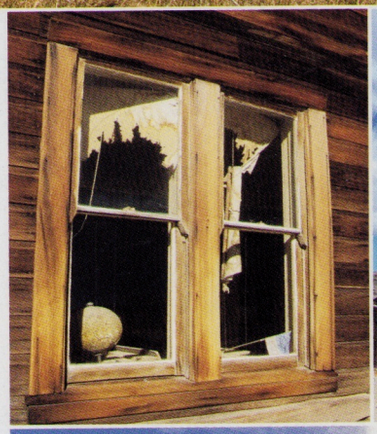

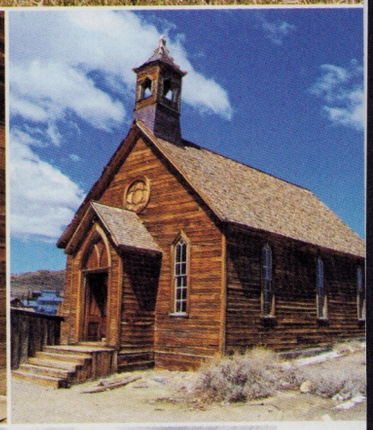

BODIE STREET © GARY SAXE/SHUTTERSTOCK / SCHOOLHOUSE WINDOW © ADSTOCK RF/SHUTTERSTOCK / BODIE CHURCH © ALEKOS McKEE
BODIE HOUSE © BARNES IAN/SHUTTERSTOCK / FRIENDS OF BODIE PARADE © MONO COUNTY TOURISM

MAIN EVENTS

AUGUST 9: FRIENDS OF BODIE DAY
Fun for kids to see what Bodie's streets look like filled with horses, wagons, and people dressed in Old West attire.

MAY – OCTOBER: PHOTOGRAPHER DAYS
Every third Saturday, enter the Park at sunrise ("magic hour" for lighting) and snap photos until closing time.
Register at BodieFoundation.org or call 760-647-6564.

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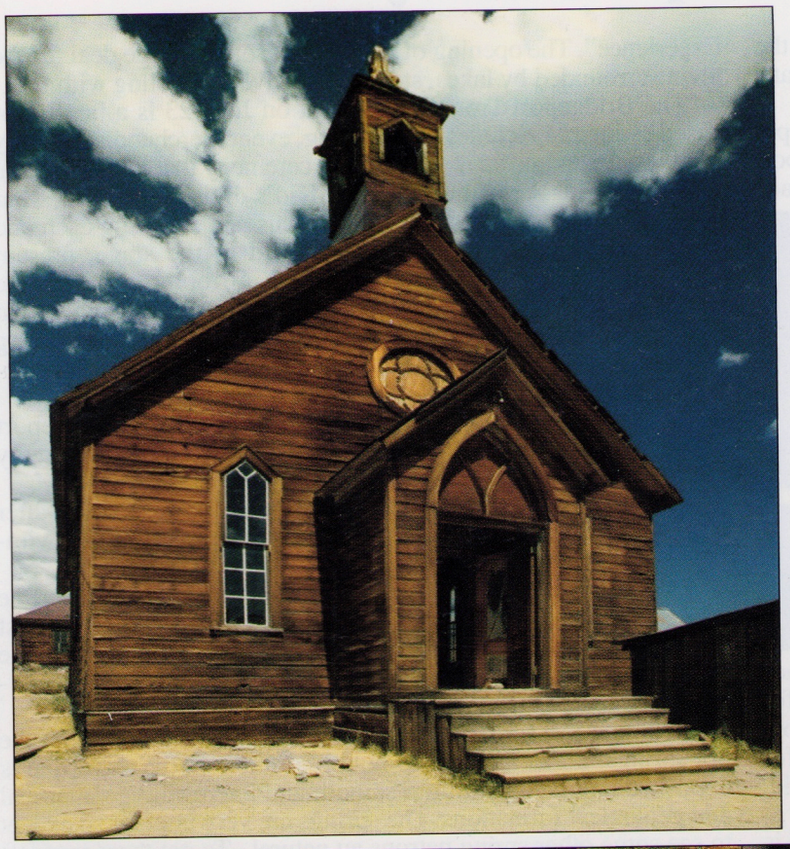
Bodie is still alive

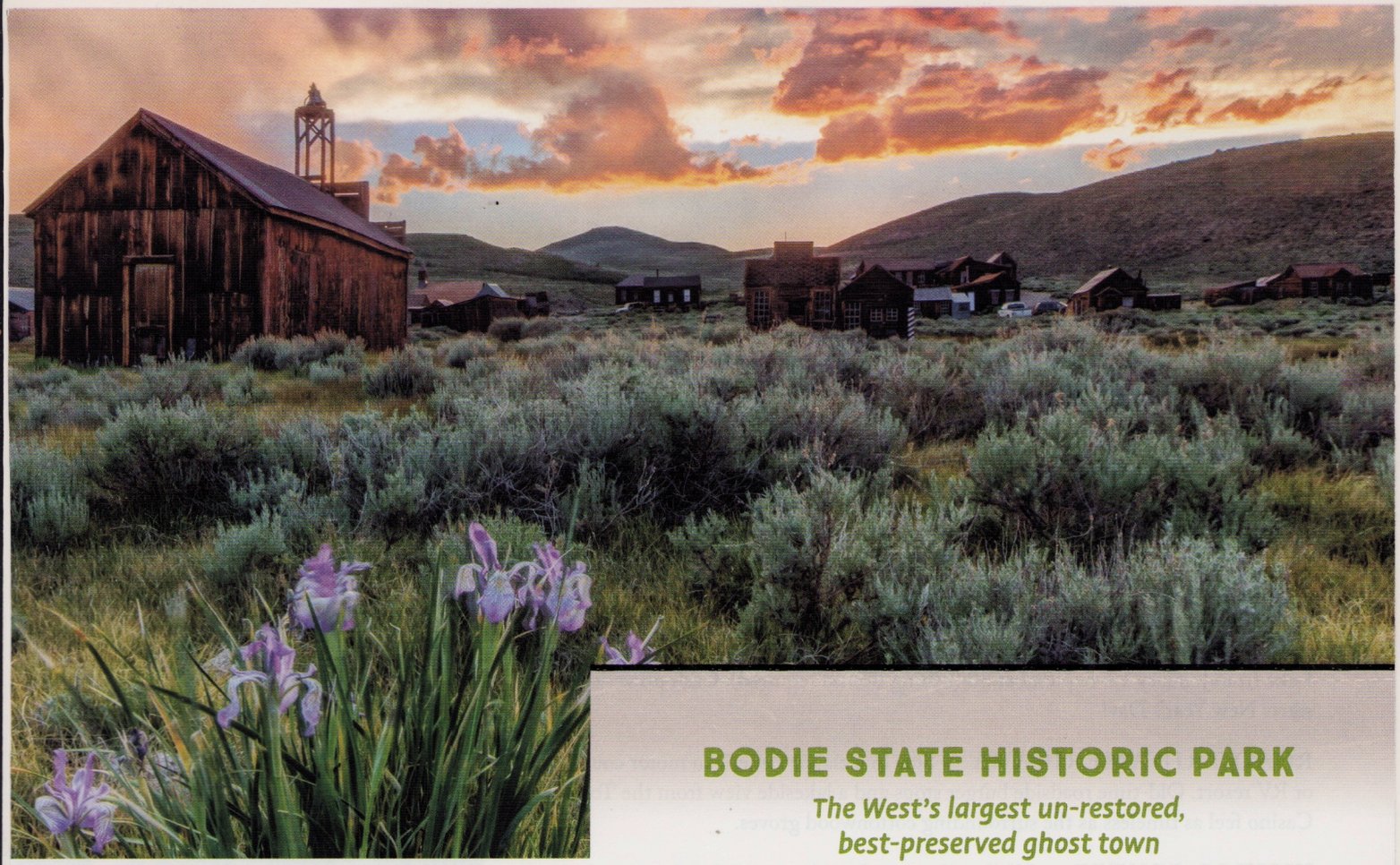
2013

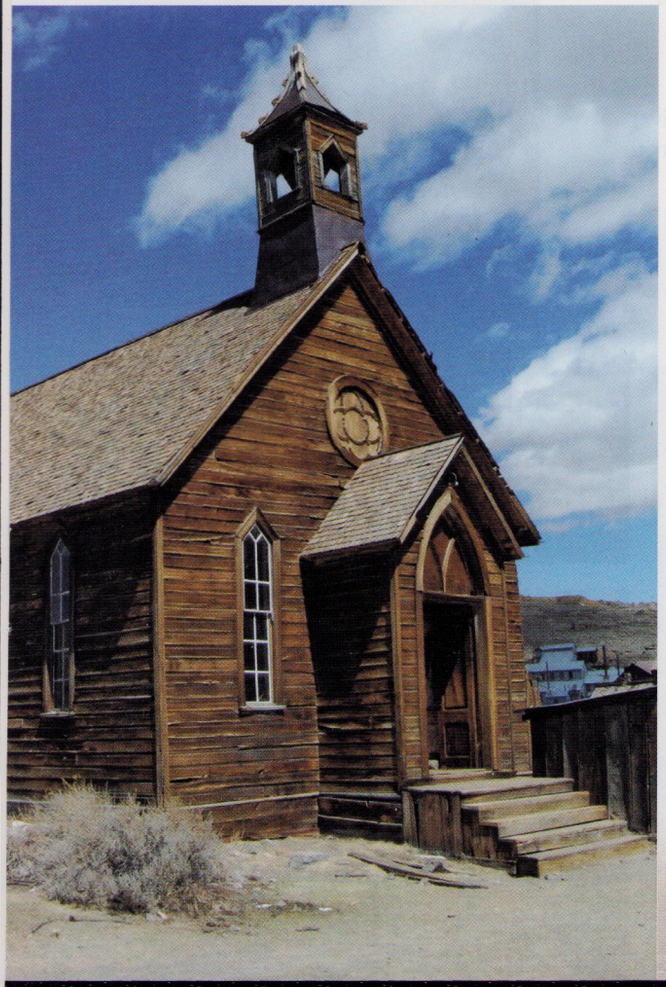


Bodie State Historical Park is a Scenic 395 landmark and a genuine California gold mining ghost town with the stories and atmosphere that render a memorable trip. About a hundered building remain in a state of "arrested decay" – frozen in time. That means golden hues of wood weathered by more than a century of wind, rain and sun, tin roofs running red with rust, and leaning walls propped up by old beams. Once populated by nearly 10,000 people, the town is named for Waterman S. Body, who discovered the small amounts of gold in the hills north of Mono Lake.

Visitors can walk down the deserted streets of a real life Old West ghost town and get the feel of what it must have been like 150 years ago.

To preserve the ghost town atmosphere, there are no commercial facilities at Bodie, such as food or gasoline. There is no camping. There is a bookstore inside the museum, where you may also inquire about daily tours. For more information call 1-760-647-6445 or visit www.parks.ca.gov and search for the Bodie links.





BODIE STATE HISTORIC PARK

The West's largest un-restored, best-preserved ghost town

MEMORIES of California's wild gold mining days come alive on Bodie's long-abandoned dirt streets, with 170 of the town's relic buildings preserved in a state of "arrested decay." From 1877 to 1888, Bodie had an estimated 10,000 residents and produced more than $35 million in gold and silver.

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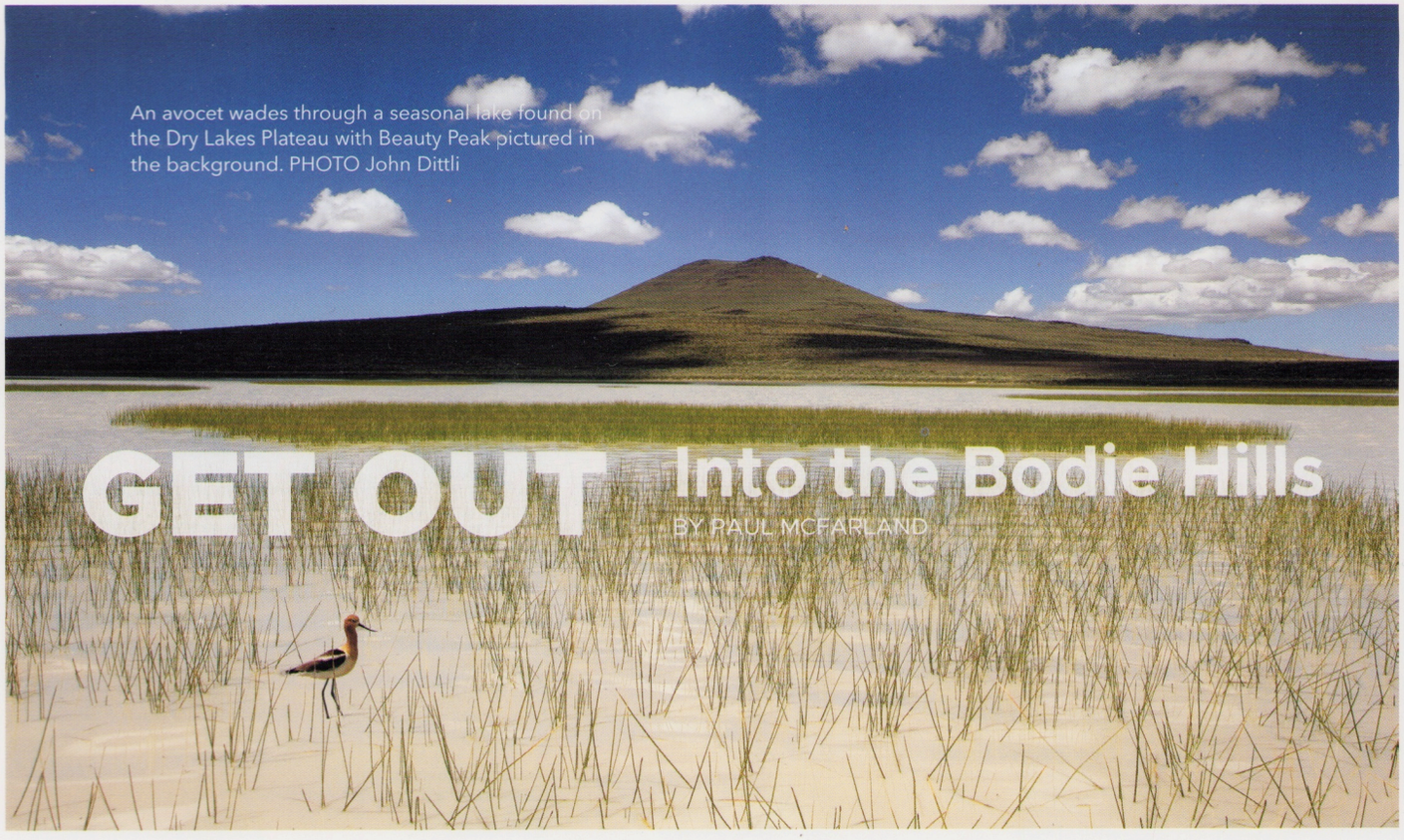
HOW TO GET TO BODIE — Bodie is located 13 miles off US 395 south of Bridgeport on SR 270 (the last three miles are unpaved and can be rough). The public is welcome to explore, photograph and relive the past at the Park, which is open daily. Please be advised that the road to Bodie is closed once winter storms arrive, reopening in the spring as weather permits.

TOUR THE STAMP MILL — Learn about the process that kept Bodie in business during its heyday: milling gold and silver ore. Tour participants step inside the last remaining mill in town.

For more information on hours of operation, fees and special events, call 760-647-6445 or visit www.MonoCounty.org/Bodie.

Bodie panorama and wild iris © JEFF SULLIVAN / JEFFSULLIVANPHOTOGRAPHY.COM
Rustic Bodie wedding © WHITE DAISY PHOTOGRAPHY
Bodie church © ALEKOS McKEE



An avocet wades through a seasonal lake found on the Dry Lakes Plateau with Beauty Peak pictured in the background. PHOTO John Dittli

GET OUT Into the Bodie Hills

BY PAUL MCFARLAND

The ease of simply wandering–walk this way, that way, over here, maybe over there–is one of the main things I love about the Great Basin desert. Largely lacking in pesky thickets of trees or impenetrable swamps, the low sagebrush steppe, clear-edged aspen groves, and open pinyon-juniper woodlands invite you to just wander. You can see where you're going, you can see where you've been, and you can see for hundreds of miles to millions of other places you've loved and would love to visit.

The Bodie Hills, a high plateau broken by volcanic ridges, cut with aspen choked canyons, and blanketed with sagebrush meadows, presents some of the best wandering country in the Eastern Sierra. Blessed with charismatic megafauna–the speedy pronghorn antelope, mule deer, and even a bear or two–as well as a rich diversity of feathered friends, from the strutting Sage Grouse and resident Golden Eagles to gaudy Western Tanagers, the Bodies combine outstanding wildlife watching with abundant cultural history. The mining town rusting away in a state of arrested decay at Bodie State Historic Park may be the most well-known history here, but the Bodies also house a rich and living Native American story. While an extensive and inviting network of mostly rough roads criss cross the Bodie Hills, there are no designated hiking trails. Thanks to the volcanic soils, this road network presents some of the best mountain biking in often-sandy Mono County, and with light traffic, these same roads make for great walking, as well as four-wheel-drive exploring.

There are few ways to get a better handle on a place then to climb to the highest point, catch your breath with a tasty beverage and some cheese, and have a good, long look around. Here in the Bodies, those perching places would be Bodie and Potato Peaks.

GETTING THERE

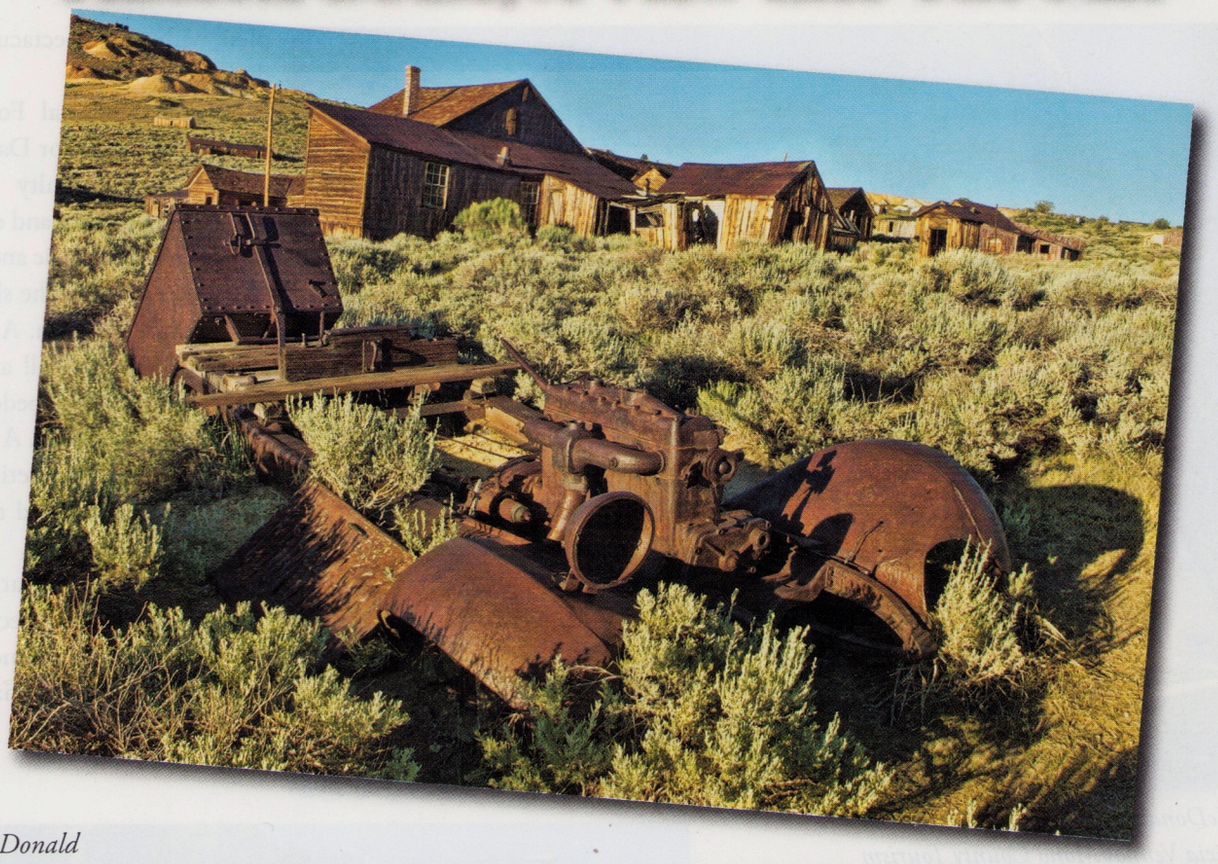
From Highway 395, turn east on State Route 270, the part-paved, part-gravel, seasonally-open route to Bodie State Historic Park. This designated scenic byway meanders along sprightly Clearwater Creek for about 5 miles before climbing out onto a broad sagebrush plateau. The high, conical, classic treeless peaks–Bodie at 10,168′ and Potato to the north, just 69′ higher–are now visible to the northeast. Here's where your journey becomes your own.

BEING THERE

Remember, this is wanderin' country! There are as many ways to climb these great peaks as there are sagebrush plants between Mormon Meadow and Murphy Spring. Get a map! Not just to understand that joke, but to get yourself to the peak. I recommend the old classic–the USGS Bodie 7.5 minute topographic quadrangle. From the south, you can park along State Route 270 and head northwest along a rough fenceline road to just below the peaks. From the east, you can wander up the Rough Creek draw to the watershed divide at the gentle saddle between the peaks. From the north, you can walk along a high ridge from the Aurora Canyon Road. While from the west, you can take your time and walk from Bridgeport. However you choose to get there, please respect the wildness of this place. In a world shrinking and growing at the same time, places like the Bodie Hills become more valuable every day.

This article was first published in Friends of the Inyo's Jeffrey Pine Journal, Fall 2014 edition.

Historic Bodie; A View Into The Past



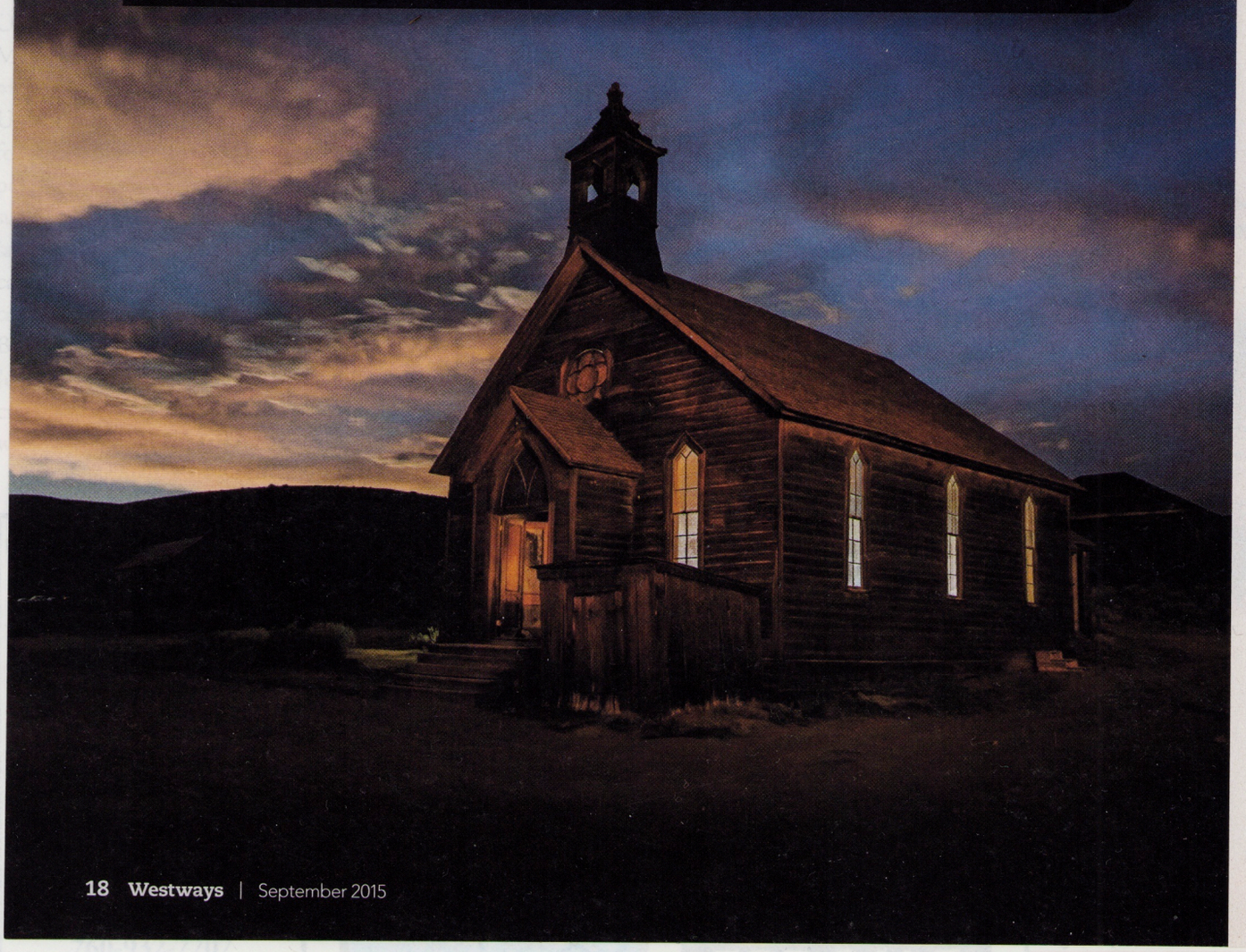
by Cheryl McDonald

On the other side of Bridgeport is the gateway to the most interesting ghost town in America, Bodie, CA. Now a state park, Bodie has been preserved as a monument to the history of the Gold Rush in arrested decay. Here you will see the remains of a town left behind by those who could no longer exist here. Just imagine getting up from breakfast, loading the kids and a few possessions in your car or wagon and heading off to a new life. Bodie is open year round; however, the winters are cold and often the only way to get to Bodie is by snow mobile. From Spring through the Fall, the gates are open from 9am-6pm. The Bodie Foundation holds several opportunities and events that make this ghost town come alive. How about a Heritage Ghost Walk or the annual Friends of Bodie Days? If you enjoy photographing abandoned places, Bodie is a must for you. To see more about Bodie and its events go to www.bodie.com or www.bodiefoundation.org

[Opening Scene]

Haunting Images

"A sea of sin, lashed by the tempest of lust and passion" is how a minister once described **Bodie** to a worried mother whose son had moved to the Eastern Sierra mining town in the late 1800s. Bodie was once among California's most populous towns and, arguably, one of its most notorious. Today, it's a state historic park and ghost town filled with Old West buildings that are maintained in a state of "arrested decay," left just as they were when Bodie's inhabitants went to seek fortune elsewhere. "To me, it's the perfect place to capture the essence of the past," says Bodie Foundation historian and guide Terri Geissinger. "You can still feel it." One of the best ways to capture that essence is through a camera lens, making photography a popular activity in Bodie. From May through October, the park, through arrangements with the Bodie Foundation, offers special access to photography instructors leading workshops for shutterbugs drawn to the abandoned buildings. Proceeds benefit the stabilization of Bodie's structures. For information about the workshops, as well as other events, including evening Ghost Walks and other guided tours, call (760) 647-6564 or visit bodiefoundation.org. —*John Poimiroo*



JEFF SULLIVAN PHOTOGRAPHY WORKSHOPS

COMMON AND RARE PLANTS OF THE BODIE HILLS

Fremontia July 1983

by Tim Messick

Go through one of the high passes on the east front of the Sierra, approaching it from the west on a warm afternoon, and you will feel a stiff breeze rising against the headwall of the steep eastern slope. Carried on that breeze will be the heavy, pungent aroma of sagebrush, telling you that you have just reached the edge of the Great Basin.

Sagebrush dominates most of the vegetation in the Great Basin. It imparts a gray-green monotony to the landscape — a monotony that at first hides the many surprises and small botanical treasures to be found in this part of the world. It was in order to seek out and document the hidden diversity of plants in this area that I came to write, as a master's thesis, a flora of one small mountain range in eastern California.

The range is called the Bodie Hills. It straddles the state line in northern Mono County, California and western Mineral County, Nevada. To the west lie the broad pastures of Bridgeport Valley, and, beyond, the jagged peaks of northeastern Yosemite. To the south is Mono Basin, with its desperately imperiled lake. In the south-central part of the range is the once lively 1880s mining town of Bodie, now preserved "in a state of arrested decay" as a state Historic Park. Elevations range from 6000 to over 10,000 feet, but most of the land lies between 7000 and 9000 feet. The summer climate is warm, dry, and windy; the winters are cold — bitterly cold, dry, and windy.

Yet in this land, inhospitable and indifferent to human organism, there is sufficient diversity of habitat to support unexpected botanical diversity. Within the boundaries of my flora, I collected some 450 species of vascular plants, representing 230 genera in 73 families. The largest families are, not surprisingly, Compositae (sixty-seven species), Gramineae (forty-nine species), and Cruciferae (thirty-four species). These are consistently the largest families in any north-temperate flora.

Characteristic Vegetation

In the 350 square miles of the Bodie Hills there are many sites of botanical interest. The one most representative of the flora of the range is also the most accessible. This is Mormon Meadow in the southwest corner of the range, three miles east of Highway 395 along Highway 270 to Bodie. The meadow itself is wet in most areas and its flora is characterized by two sedges (*Carex nebraskensis* and *C. lanuginosa*), *Iris missouriensis, Aster adscendens,* and blue-eyed grass (*Sisyrinchium halophilum*). In drier areas these give way to rushes (*Juncus balticus*), another sedge (*Carex douglasii*), Muhly grass (*Muhlenbergia richardsonis*), and wild barley (*Hordeum brachyantherum*).

The low hills surrounding Mormon Meadow are clothed in vegetation typical of moderate elevations in the Great Basin. There are open stands of single-leaf pinon (*Pinus monophylla*) and Utah juniper (*Juniperus osteosperma*). Big sagebrush (*Artemisia tridentata*) is ubiquitous, but an early-summer stroll across these seemingly drab hillsides will reveal a colorful array of associated species. The shrubs include antelope brush (*Purshia tridentata*), rabbit brush (*Chrysothamnus nauseosus*), and wild buckwheats (*Eriogonum umbellatum* and *E. microthecum*). Perennial herbs, such as lupine (*Lupinus caudatus*) and hawksbeard (*Crepis acuminata*), are abundant, as are the grasses, Great Basin wildrye (*Elymus cinereus*), squirreltail (*Sitanion hystrix*),

Mormon Meadow, along the road to Bodie, is heavily grazed by sheep in late summer. Author's photographs except where noted.

The remains of the once thriving goldmining town of Bodie is nestled in the Bodie Hills. Photograph by Vernon Kipping.

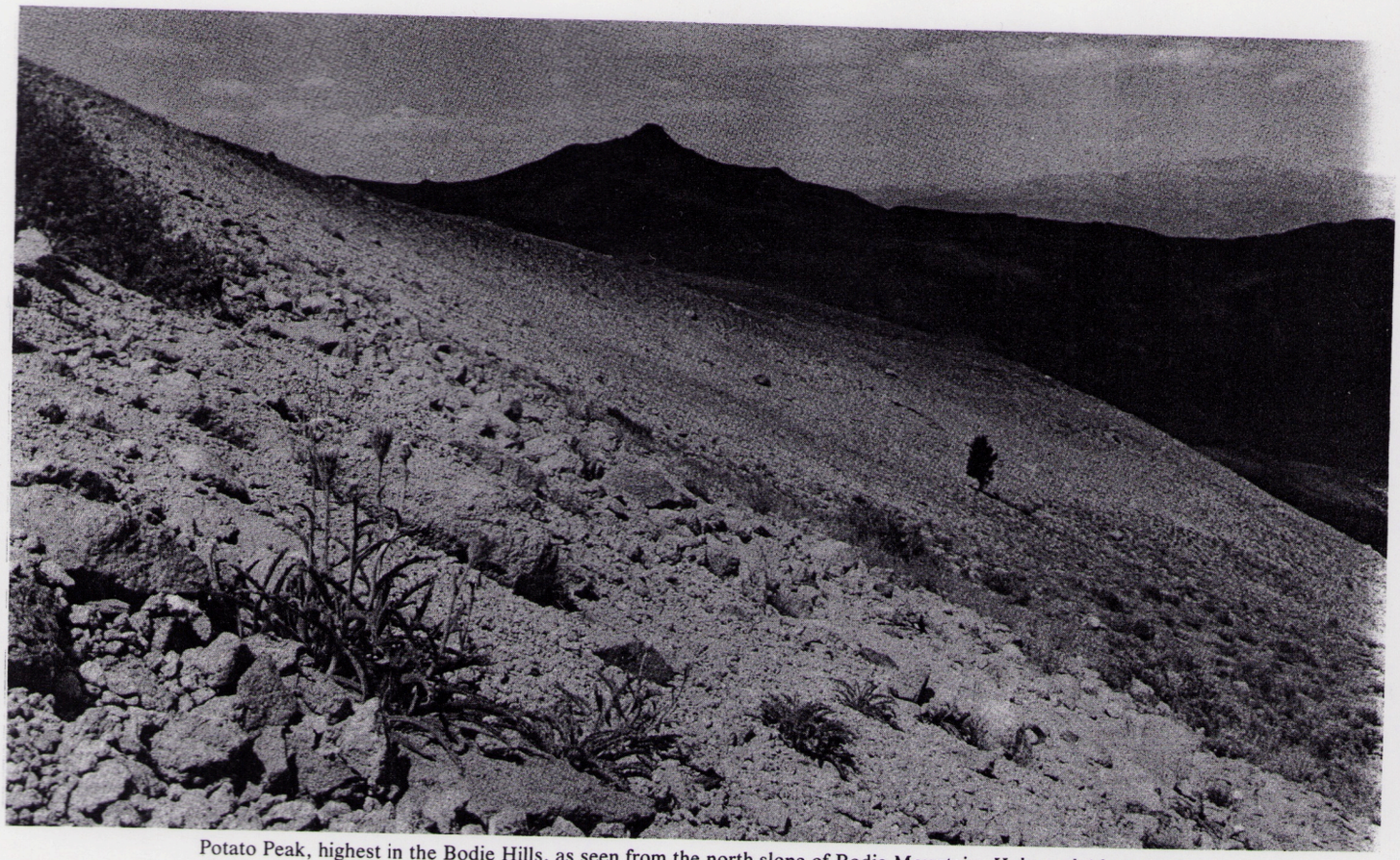
Indian ricegrass (*Oryzopsis hymenoides*), and western needlegrass (*Stipa occidentalis*).

Toward the north end of the Bodie Hills, at the northwest base of Masonic Mountain, is a fine example of another widespread vegetation type. Its principal species is the diminutive black sagebrush (*Artemisia nova*). The other perennials here are also low and compact, the more colorful of them being stemless goldenweed (*Haplopappus acaulis*), prickly phlox (*Leptodactylon pungens*), paintbrush (*Castilleja chromosa*), and *Aster scopulorum*). Geophytes, such as bitterroot (*Lewisia rediviva*), onions (*Allium anceps* and *A. atrorubens*), and *Muilla transmontana,* are more numerous here than else-Nearby, at the north base of Masonic Mountain, is Lakeview Spring, with a large, dense grove of quaking aspen (*Populus tremuloides*). These areas are approached by a good graded road from a point 3.7 miles north of Bridgeport on Highway 182.

Another point of botanical interest is Travertine Hot Springs, one mile southeast of Bridgeport (park beside the meadow behind the Animal Shelter and walk up the small stream). For several thousand years, scalding subterranean waters have trickled to the surface here, depositing mounds of colorfully banded travertine. The heavily mineralized water and soil allow only specially adapted plants to survive here, and many of these species, while by no means rare, occur nowhere else in the Bodie Hills. Moist soils support greasewood (*Sarcobatus vermiculatus*), saltgrass (*Distichlis spicata*), bulrush (*Scirpus nevadensis*), and *Cleomella parviflora,* a member of the caper family. In wetter soils grow large populations of arrow grasses (*Triglochin concinna* and *T. maritima*), and *Haplopappus racemosus*. Drier soils support wallflower (*Erysimum argillosum*), sandwort (*Arenaria nuttallii*), blazing stars (*Mentzelia laevicaulis* and *M. torreyi*), and a variety of goosefoots (*Chenopodium* spp.).

Higher Elevations

The fourth of these most interesting areas comprises the highest elevations in the range, Potato Peak (10,236 feet) and Bodie Mountain (10,195 feet)



Potato Peak, highest in the Bodie Hills, as seen from the north slope of Bodie Mountain. *Hulsea algida* and other alpine species grow in the foreground.

stand a mile apart in the middle of the Bodie Hills. Drive four miles northwest from Bodie on Geiger Grade (the Bodie-Masonic road) to Rough Creek. The road is unpaved but easily passable in two-wheel drive with high clearance. Rough Creek is an almost-perennial stream draining the eastern slopes of the two peaks. An easy 0.6-mile walk along its banks brings you to an ecological island of subalpine species which most likely migrated here from the Sierra Nevada during a time of cooler summers and longer winters. Such plants as false hellebore (*Veratrum californicum*), willow (*Salix orestera*), bush cinquefoil (*Potentilla fruticosa*), and another member of the rose family, *Sibbaldia procumbens,* do not grow below this 9600-foot elevation.

Higher still, where large snowbanks linger on the north faces of both Potato Peak and Bodie Mountain, keeping the soil cold and moist late into the season, a few truly alpine species survive. These are a sedge (*Carex helleri*), a rush (*Juncus parryi*), a buttercup (*Ranunculus eschscholtzii* var. *oxynotus*), and, most notably, an alpine hulsea (*Hulsea algida*). On the summit of Potato Peak it is once more very dry, but an alpine fleabane, *Erigeron compositus,* thrives among the rocks there.

Rare Plants

Among the most fascinating plants in the Bodie Hills are of course the rare species. None is strictly endemic to the range, but the one most nearly approaching this status is *Draba quadricostata* (Cruciferae). It is a cespitose perennial, forming cushion-like mounds or fragmented clumps on the clayey or gravelly soils of hillsides and ridge tops. Its small yellow flowers wither early each spring to be replaced by short capsules called silicles, which become inflated like bladders. In this respect they resemble the fruits of *Draba douglasii* var. *crockeri,* also occurring here, while *D. quadricostata* is unique in having an elevated midrib or costa on both faces of the fruit. These, together with the rib-like prominences of the sutures on either edge of the fruit, give the appearance of a silicle with four costas — hence the specific epithet.

In 1977, there were only six or seven known populations of this plant. During the following four summers, I located many more populations — some very large — simply by walking in areas where no botanist had ever walked before. (Let no one think that botanists have scoured every mile of the state —

this is far from true!) This *Draba* now appears to be common around Masonic Mountain, Mormon Meadow, and Beauty Peak.

Another exciting find was *Astragalus johannis-howellii* (Leguminosae). This tiny-flowered milk-vetch or locoweed was named by Rupert Barneby, an Englishman who distinguished himself in his studies of the Great Plains flora, for John Thomas Howell, of the California Academy of Sciences. Until 1978 it was known only from Long Valley in southern Mono County. On June 27 of that year, Ken Genz of the Toiyabe National Forest in Reno located a population east of the Bodie Hills in southern Mud Spring Valley. Three years and a day later I found an extensive population on the volcanic tablelands surrounding Beauty Peak. The population, thus, climbs to a new elevational high for this species — 8600 feet.

Perhaps the most pleasing find of all, however, was the rare, threatened and once-thought-to-be-extinct *Phacelia monoensis* (Hydrophyllaceae). This species was described as new to science in 1981, yet it was thought until that year to have been extinct for nearly thirty years. To elucidate: from the late 1930s to mid-1940s, Annie Alexander and Louise Kellogg collected extensively throughout California and the west. In the summers of 1944 and 1945 they visited the Bodie Hills and collected, among a great many other things, several specimens they identified as *Miltitzia lutea*. A few more collections were made north and southeast of the Bodie Hills from 1932 to 1951. *Miltitzia* is much like *Phacelia,* but has seeds with transverse corrugations and tiny flowers that are bright yellow. They are so much alike in other respects that the tendency in recent decades has been to treat *Miltitzia* as a section of *Phacelia*. Then, in 1975, Richard Halse began a revision of this section for his doctoral work at Oregon State University. After examining the above-mentioned specimens he decided they belonged in a distinct and newly recognized entity, which he christened *Phacelia monoensis*. But the new species had not been collected for twenty-nine years and was therefore "presumed extinct" in CNPS's *Rare Plant Inventory* (2nd edition). That same year (1980), it was rediscovered near Masonic Mountain by Matt Lavin, a student at the University of Nevada. In 1981 I found three more populations in the central and southeastern Bodie Hills, and in 1982, Dean Taylor found it near its type locality in Mormon Meadow.

Draba quadricostata, in the foreground, occurs in scattered clumps through much of the Bodie Hills.

All three of these species demonstrate a common pattern in rare-plant research: initial discovery in one or a few localities (many of these discoveries were made twenty to sixty years ago); then many years during which nobody bothers to look for the plant; then a flurry of new discoveries as a new period of floristic, taxonomic, or conservation work begins.

The Bodie Hills are by no means a wilderness. Prospectors, over the last one and a quarter centuries, have climbed each hill and descended each ravine, leaving many such places with the marks of their quest for gold and silver. During the 1860s, 1870s and 1880s, tens of thousands of cords of pinon pine were cut for fueling domestic stoves and miners' furnaces. In recent decades, cattle and sheep have heavily overgrazed the hills and meadows, trampling lakeshores and fouling springs. It will be the challenging task of land managers with the BLM and Toiyabe National Forest to minimize the impacts of future grazing, prospecting, geothermal development, and tourism upon the rare plants, water resources, and scenic values of the Bodie Hills.

A wildfire threatened the popular ghost town of Bodie (above) in Mono County earlier this month. Thanks to Ranger Eric Keefer, who immediately spotted the fire, there was no damage to the historic structures. File photo

7-30-2009

Ranger's quick thinking saves historic state park

Lightning strike and subsequent fire witnesses by ranger at Bodie

By Mike Gervais
Register Staff

A Bureau of Land Management ranger was in the right place at the right time to save Bodie from a wildfire.

Eric Keefer, law enforcement ranger, for the BLM saw a lightning strike at about 3 p.m. July 15 as he patrolled the Bodie Hills area.

The lightning started a small brush fire adjacent to the historic ghost town. After calling his dispatch center Keefer traveled to the blaze and realized that the brush fire was quickly reaching flame lengths of 10-15 feet and was heading towards structures in the Bodie Historical State Park.

Bodie was a thriving town in the early 1800s and has been protected in a state of arrested decay and for that reason the historical wooden structures could have been easily destroyed by fire.

When Ranger Keefer arrived on scene the fire was about one acre in size and moving towards the structures.

At about the same time, several other lightning strikes had started 19 other fires in the region. Ranger Keefer and the Owens Valley Incident Command Center diverted an air tanker, water dropping helicopter and other fire equipment to the "Bodie Fire." The air support made several drops to prevent the fire from spreading before ground equipment arrived on scene.

The fire was finally doused at about two acres.

"If it wasn't for Ranger Keefer's being on site, immediate reporting and an available tanker already in the air and quickly diverted to the scene the Bodie Historical State Park could have been destroyed or damaged," BLM officials said.

The Bodie Historical State Park was a thriving gold mining town with more than 10,000 people in its heyday. Its mines produced more than $100 million in gold. At its peak in 1880, it had 60 saloons. Bodie's mines demanded cordwood from the Sierra foothills and had its own railway to supply the demand. The town had 20 stamp mills and built its own hydroelectric plant to run them. It's now one of the most popular ghost towns in the West with more than 200,000 visitors per year.

Matt Black for The Wall Street Journal (2)

Robert Deckleman of Novato, Calif., visits the preserved town of Bodie, Calif., on Saturday. Below, an abandoned mine's entrance in the Bodie Hills.

Gold Fever Stirs Ghost Town

By Justin Scheck 8-11-2011

BODIE, Calif.—A push for gold mining to return to the scrubby hills around this Central California ghost town has tapped into a national debate over land use.

Residents and officials near Bodie have been sparring for months over a New York company's plans to explore the area for a potential gold mine. The recent surge in gold's value and a bill pending in Congress are giving the fight new significance.

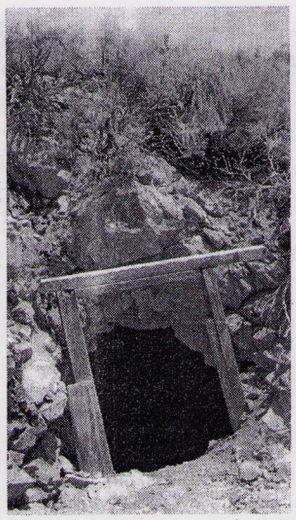
The measure would remove more than 40 million acres nationwide—including the Bodie Hills—from federal "Wilderness Study Area" and "Inventoried Roadless Area" protection, potentially opening the land for mining, logging and other uses. The protective status was designed to be temporary, but has covered millions of acres for decades.

The bill's sponsor, California Republican Rep. Kevin McCarthy, believes the legislation would generate new economic activity around the country, his spokeswoman said. She said the bill, which has 31 co-sponsors, would only remove protections for land federal agencies have deemed inappropriate for wilderness status. Wyoming Republican Sen. John Barrasso has introduced a corresponding bill in the Senate.

Environmental groups disdain the bill. "We call it 'the Great Outdoors Giveaway,'" said Sally Miller, an official with the Wilderness Society. She said the government should assess the areas one by one and seek local input.

In addition to the Bodie area, near the Nevada border, the bill would release from the protective designations areas including swamps in Florida and an elk-rearing area in Colorado. Federal agencies would be in charge of issuing new permits for mining and other uses in the areas.

The Bodie dispute is "the tip of the sword" in a growing national



debate over balancing conservation and resource extraction, said Mark Wallace, chief executive of **Tigris Financial** Ltd., the New York company exploring for gold in the Bodie Hills.

Riding a gold bonanza, Bodie grew to 10,000 residents by 1880. But the mines eventually became less profitable and closed, leaving contamination and a near-deserted town by 1915. Bodie was preserved as a state park. Today, many of the houses stand preserved in what the state calls "arrested decay," with furniture still in place. Tourists walk deserted streets and drive dirt roads out of town past old mining claims.

The current gold boom is driving the renewed mining push. With prices skyrocketing, miners are targeting areas where obstacles like the Wilderness Study Area designation might have deterred them in the past.

A subsidiary of Mr. Wallace's company, Cougar Gold LLC, has bought the rights to old mine claims near Bodie and has drilled test holes to assess the deposits. Company officials said at a public meeting that there could be several million ounces of gold in the area—a substantial haul. Cougar has invested more than $7 million in the project, Mr. Wallace said, and wants to continue exploring.

Mining is grandfathered in as a permissible use in the area, though there are limits to what could be done to improve roads. Mr. Wallace said his company's stance is that its project can't proceed unless the wilderness designation is removed, since the company doesn't want to mine in an area where the local community is putting up obstacles.

That's a polarizing issue in the Bodie area, where the economy now is dependent largely on summer tourism such as camping.

A tourism economy based on the area's wild lands "is more valuable and sustainable than the short-term benefits of something like mining," said Byng Hunt, a member of the board of supervisors of Mono County, which encompasses the Bodie Hills.

Mr. Wallace says the area's ecological value needs to be balanced with the nation's need for resources like gold, and others say the old mine claims nearby—and the fact Bodie was once a mining boomtown—make it a good place for a new mine.

"It shouldn't be looked at as a weird thing to mine in a mining area," said Supervisor Tim Hansen, who added that the region needs the mining jobs. Mono County's unemployment rate was 12.9% in June, compared with 12.1% statewide.

Mr. Hansen, who owns a business that harvests brine shrimp for sale to seafood cultivators, uses himself as an example. When the shrimp business slowed in 2009 and Mr. Hansen was laid off from his other job on a road crew, he spent four months before he was elected supervisor working for Cougar driving a water truck for the mine-exploration project.

At a February meeting of the board of supervisors, more than 100 people argued over the return of mining. Some supported the project for the jobs it could create. Others expressed concern over its potential environmental impact. The supervisors decided not to take a stance.

The issue returned this month when a committee advising the board said it should support removing the wilderness designation. The main impetus was the restrictions the designation can put on activities like grazing and removing timber for firewood, said Jan Huggins, vice chairman of the panel.

Ms. Huggins says she isn't convinced mining is appropriate for the area, but isn't opposed to the gold exploration. "I'd like to see some people around here get jobs," she said.

WSJ.com

QUESTION OF THE DAY: Should the 40 million acres of land be removed from U.S. protection? Weigh in at **WSJ.com/Question**. Bodie photos at **WSJ.com/US**.

Celebrate Friends of

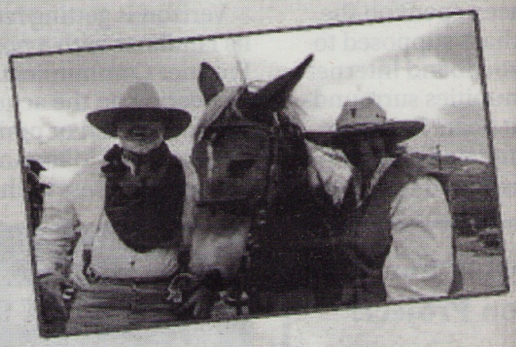
BODIE DAY

Goodbye God, We're Going to Bodie

Bodie State Historic Park

AUGUST 8, 2015

Daytime Festivities Open to the Public from 9am to 6pm



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BODIE FOUNDATION

CALIFORNIA STATE PARKS

www.thesheetnews.com THE SHEET | Saturday, August

2011

Get Out!

Befriending the Bodie Hills

by Jack Shipley

"Wow!"

Yeah.

"It's the best view of the Sierra I've ever seen."

Right.

We're standing on the top of Bodie Peak, elevation 10,195 feet, and we can see 120 miles of the Sierra crest spread out hugely and brilliantly in front of us, from the Carson-Iceberg Wilderness near Markleeville south to the high peaks of Kings Canyon National Park. Our foreground is the high central plateau of the Bodie Hills, one of the best places to hike, bicycle, ski, and spot wildlife in the West. But nobody goes there.

The only thing most people know about the Bodie Hills is that the deservedly-famous ghost town of Bodie occupies a high basin in the south-central part of the range. Bodie is a nifty little burg, to be sure: it's the largest remaining unrestored ghost town anywhere, and the official coldest place in the three far-western states. It's partially protected by the bankrupt California State Park System. Though some of the fascinating high desert country beyond the little state park is partially protected, too, as part of the BLM's National Conservation Lands system, the area is threatened by destructive human activity like modern-day industrial mining.

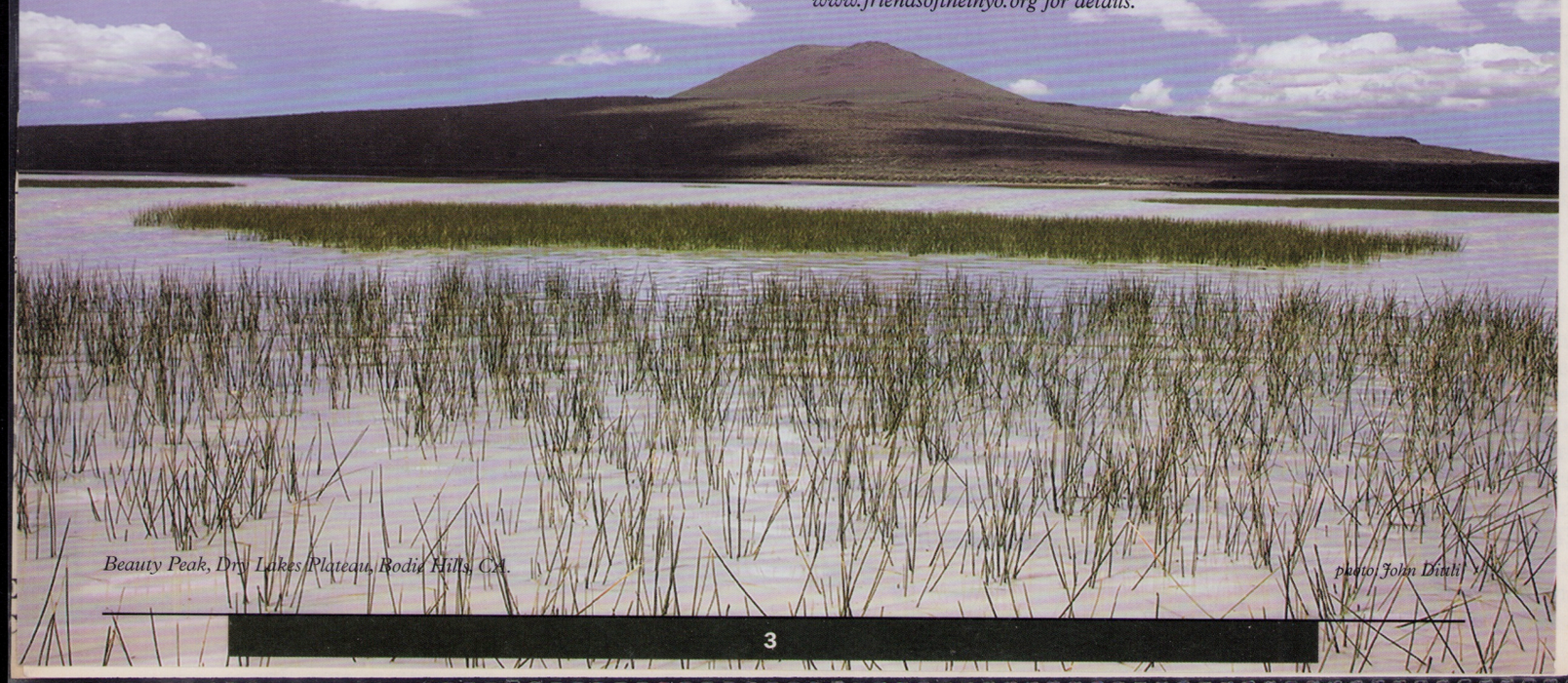
I've seen more antelope, coyotes, badgers, peregrine falcons, golden eagles, ermines, mountain lions and sage grouse in the Bodie Hills than in all the rest of the world combined. Sure, that's just a function of my own limited geographical experience, but the region is definitely rich.

These hills could use a few knowledgeable friends. And the best way to become a friend – and have a good time in the process – is to saunter around this unknown corner of California/Nevada border country and check out the view. Try the following hike around Bodie Peak, about seven miles. Keep your eye open for antelope, falcons and sage grouse.

Start by driving to Bodie. (You don't have to pay the entrance the entrance fee if you aren't going to visit the town, but it's definitely worth a visit.) Follow the main road around the town toward the parking lot, but instead of turning right into the parking lot, turn left (northwest) up a bumpy dirt road called the Geiger Grade. Follow the Geiger Grade steeply uphill for 2 ½ miles. You'll find yourself on the scenic central plateau of the Bodie Hills, elevation 9,000 feet, with a small fenced area to your right (northeast), and a jeep road and cattle trough to your left (southwest). Park here and walk southwest up the jeep road. Go over a low saddle, pass to the left of a nice aspen grove, and after a total of one mile stay right (west-southwest) at a junction. After an additional half mile, you hit a junction and a cattle fence, where you stay right again, and go steeply up the southwest shoulder of Bodie Peak. Once you reach the high point of the fence/jeep road, you can easily see and ascend either Bodie Peak or, a mile further along, Potato Peak, which is actually 41 feet higher. The views are astounding in all directions!

The hike can be made into a loop by descending cross-country almost anywhere east or north from Bodie Peak until you intersect the Geiger Grade road; then stroll back to the east two miles to your car. A nice route during wildflower season is northeast down the beginning of the Rough Creek drainage between Bodie and Potato Peaks. Note the surprising remnant of a small glacial cirque northeast of Bodie Peak, and the four relic limber pines on its edge.

Jack Shipley is a former Bodie State Park Ranger and Friends of the Inyo member who lives in Mono City. Jack occasionally leads hikes to the Bodie Hills and other destinations with Friends of the Inyo. Go to www.friendsoftheinyo.org for details.



Beauty Peak, Dry Lakes Plateau, Bodie Hills, CA. *photo: John Dinsdale*

Waterways and Restoration in the Bodies

BY JORA FOGG, POLICY DIRECTOR

2021

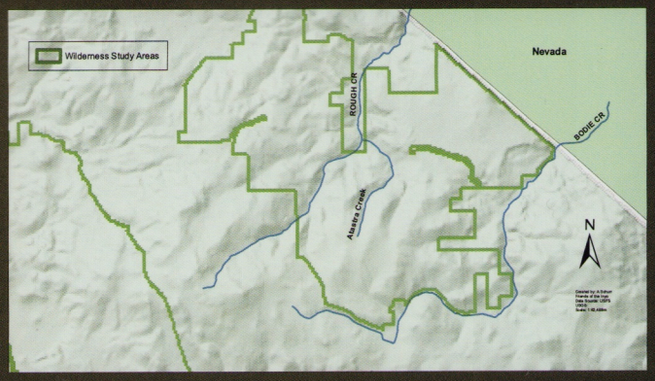
This page:
An aerial view of Rough Creek.

Following page, Left: map shows the general location of Atastra. **Upper right:** Bodie and Rough Creeks, map shows historic range of the Lahontan Cutthroat Trout within California (show in green). **Lower right:** stream dwelling Lahontan Cutthroat Trout, Nevada Department of Wildlife.

East of the Bridgeport Valley and Mono Basin rise the Bodie Hills, a mosaic of Great Basin habitats with sagebrush, small islands of conifer forests and talus slopes, verdant aspen groves, and pockets of wet meadows that feed ephemeral creeks. Three main creeks, Bodie, Atastra, and Rough, drain eastward making their way from the highest peaks of the Bodie Hills: Potato and Bodie Peaks. The majority of the land around these creeks are managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) with multiple private inholdings that provide for a working landscape of ranching that contributes to Mono County's rural economy. Much of the springs and water sources are found on private land.

Rough Creek begins at a high elevation (9,800 feet) spring between Bodie Mountain and Potato Peak. It flows northeast for several miles, crossing into Nevada before joining Bodie Creek at the lush meadows of the historic Nine Mile Ranch–now managed by Nevada State Parks as the Walker River State Recreation Area. At the ranch, Rough Creek bends northwest and joins the east Walker River. Bodie Creek begins at springs within the Bodie State Historic Park (BSHP) at an elevation of 8,400 feet and also flows northeast to Nevada joining Rough Creek at the Nine Mile Ranch. In most years, surface flow in the creek disappears typically one mile downstream of Bodie State Historic Park (BSHP). Water then reappears where the creek flows over bedrock outcropping several miles upstream of the California/Nevada state line. Atastra is the smallest of the three and flows for a shorter distance (1.7 miles), again, northeast into Rough Creek. Rough and Atastra creeks were found eligible by BLM (1993) for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System and are proposed candidates for a Wild and Scenic River designation. The headwaters of the creeks are within the Congressionally-designated Bodie Wilderness Study Area.

Waterways in the Bodie Hills have been affected by mining. The BSHP, designated in 1962, is located near the headwaters of Bodie Creek and consists of the



remains of the town of Bodie, a gold mining boomtown whose heyday was in the late 1800's. The Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) is responsible for water quality protection east of the Sierra Nevada crest. The Regional Board administers the Clean Water Act (CWA) within the Lahontan Region. The Lahontan RWQCB placed Bodie Creek on what is known as the 303(d) list of impaired waters in 1991 based on data collected from sediment, fish tissue, and surface water samples. Through the 1990s and 2000s various metals and cyanide were detected in sediment samples in Bodie Creek and the surrounding area, including arsenic, antimony, beryllium, cobalt, copper, chromium, lead, mercury, nickel, silver, and zinc. Mercury concentrations in aquatic invertebrates at all sites downstream from mining activities in the Rough and Bodie watersheds were also elevated.

Beneficial uses of Bodie Creek described by the Water Board include municipal and domestic water supply, agricultural supply, groundwater recharge, recreation, commercial and sport fishing, wildlife and spawning habitat, and rare and endangered species habitat. The viability and safety of these ongoing uses will depend on demonstrated partnerships between agencies, landowners, and conservation groups that will result in restoration and remediation activities, hopefully leading to future removal of these creeks from the 303(d) list.

Bodie and Rough historically support the federally threatened Lahontan Cutthroat Trout (LCT), which may be impacted by elevated metals concentrations and pH in the creeks. The trout was listed as endangered in 1970 and reclassified as threatened in 1975. Eastern California is one of three endemic locations of the species. In 1844, there were 400 to 600 stream-dwelling populations in over 3,600 miles of streams just within the Lahontan Basin. Abundance and distribution shrank rapidly in the face of extensive landscape changes associated with development, mining, timber harvest, road and railroad building, dams and diversions, pollution, non-native fish introductions, and commercial harvest. The Bridgeport Valley was the first known location for LCT to be eliminated. The species uses cold-water habitats including small headwater tributary streams such as those found in the Bodie Hills. Preferred habitat is cool, flowing water with well-vegetated and stable stream banks that provide shade and cover, with stream velocity breaks and rocky riffle-run areas.

The LCT recovery plan (1995) calls for establishing a subpopulation of the species in the Rough Creek drainage, with the goals of preserving genetic integrity and, eventually, providing a new sport fishery. Both Bodie and Rough Creek are being examined by the management agencies as potential sites for reintroduction of LCT. The placement of fish barriers will isolate competitive non-native species in the drainage allowing for the stocking and increased survivorship of the native trout. In 2003 the Walker River Basin Recovery Implementation Team released a short-term action plan for LCT in the Walker Basin. Seventeen years later, the agencies are exploring opportunities for good projects that provide for landscape-level ecological benefits.

The Bodie Hills Conservation Partnership, with leadership from the Walker Basin Conservancy, is developing a project to understand the ecological processes of Rough Creek that will help inform the reintroduction and eventual recovery of Lahontan Cutthroat Trout in the Bodie Hills and support legislative efforts to permanently protect the Bodie Hills from the harmful effects of mining, as well as bring much needed economic revenue to northern Mono County. Local, state, and federal investments in watershed restoration that seek to remove Bodie and Rough Creek from the list of impaired waters could be jeopardized if mining is allowed to continue in the Bodie Hills. The toxic byproducts of mining activity are one of the most harmful impacts to fish and wildlife. There is no substitute for high-value habitat and very few streams reaches within the Walker River basin are still suitable for Lahontan Cutthroat restoration. Permanent protection for the Bodie Hills will bring needed resources for ongoing research and restoration and keep this landscape and its waterways healthy for future generations of people and wildlife.

Winter 2011-2012

Preservation

Bodie Hills Hold Strong

By Drew Foster, FOI Conservation Associate

What has been happening in the Bodie Hills lately? As I write this update in late October, the aspen groves are changing colors, with bright yellows and oranges against the greens and browns of the sagebrush steppe. Pronghorn, sage grouse and mule deer are running around, foraging, and fattening up for the winter. The rabbitbrush in full bloom ushers in the fall, and the winter winds are beginning to blow. The cattle and sheep have grazed, and have come off the land to give it a rest. Tourists and visitors have flocked in and out of Bodie State Historic Park and the surrounding area. The snow will come soon enough, and skiers will be out enjoying the rolling hills and solitude that epitomizes the wild backcountry of the Eastern Sierra.

Fortunately, large-scale gold mining is not part of the above picture. Mining interests have not moved forward and the Wilderness Study Areas (WSA) in the Bodie Hills remain protected. The quietude of the Bodie Hills goes on as usual, for now. But Congressman Kevin McCarthy (R-CA) introduced H.R. 1581 in April, a bill that would release all WSAs on BLM land, and all Inventoried Roadless Areas on Forest Service lands. Combined, this represents nearly 60 million acres of land that would be removed from federal protections. It is an unprecedented piece of legislation that would undermine decades of land protection in one fell swoop.

In August, McCarthy's bill came before the Mono County Board of Supervisors, along with a resolution to specifically release the Bodie WSA, which would have opened it up to gold mining and other large-scale industrial uses. Your support helped generate nearly 2,500 letters and emails opposing this legislation and Bodie WSA release. The Supervisors wisely acknowledged that they have no business supporting the overly broad legislation, which would strip away local control and debate about the future of the Bodie Hills and other special places.

The WSAs in the Bodie Hills, and other specially designated lands, were established because they contain significant wilderness characteristics. These areas have become part of the BLM's National Landscape Conservation System, which encompasses 27 million acres of National Monuments, Wild and Scenic Rivers, National Historic Trails and more.

These Conservation Lands are unique and diverse, and the BLM recognized the need for a comprehensive vision for these special places. The agency recently published a 15-year strategy, defining a mission: "to conserve, protect, and restore nationally significant landscapes and places that have outstanding cultural, ecological, and scientific values for the benefit of current and future generations."

The BLM has the opportunity to become a leader in conservation, and steward their land responsibly with help from its partners. You, too, have the opportunity to make a difference; H.R. 1581 cannot be allowed to roll back protections on these exceptional conservation lands. Call or write your Congressperson today opposing this bill, and continue to voice your support for protecting our national treasures like the Bodie Hills.

After working with FOI pulling weeds in the Mono Basin Scenic Area, students from Rustic Pathways enjoy the sweeping view atop Bodie Mountain. (Andrew Schurr)

Where and How To Get Out On the Eastside this Summer

"You can hike in the Bodie Hills?"

By Drew Foster 2012

Bodie State Historic Park (Drew Foster)

As part of a broader coalition called the Bodie Hills Conservation Partnership, I've been working for the past couple of years on Friends of the Inyo's campaign to protect the Bodie Hills. This has included everything from organizing activists, writing letters and making phone calls to elected officials, to leading hikes and running informational seminars about the Bodie Hills. In the process, I've both learned a lot and developed quite a passion for the place.

I suppose this has led to a case of losing sight of the forest for the trees – or the sagebrush steppe for the black sagebrush, as it were. I was speaking with someone recently who was looking through our brochure, saw photos of people hiking and camping and asked, "You can go hiking in the Bodie Hills?" As this is something I take for granted, I paused a second before responding in the enthusiastic affirmative. "Well, yeah!"

Although the mountainous, sagebrush-covered terrain lacks many developed hiking trails, there is a phenomenal suite of recreational opportunities in the Bodie Hills and places to explore and enjoy Eastern Sierra solitude. Here are just a few of the more popular places to visit:

Bodie Mountain & Potato Peak: An ideal year-round destination, these two neighboring peaks represent the highest points in the Bodie Hills. Great for a summer hike, or winter ski, they overlook Bodie State Historic Park, with views into the Mono Lake Basin and a panoramic view of the Sierra Nevada range. Both sit above 10,000', so be prepared for a moderate to strenuous adventure to the top. They are best accessible from the Aurora Canyon Road from Bridgeport, or from the Geiger Grade Road north out of the state park.

Dry Lakes Plateau: Known for its stunning wildflower displays, and frequent sightings of pronghorn antelope, the Dry Lakes Plateau is a gem of the Bodie Hills, and the Great Basin Desert overall. Accessible by hiking or four-wheel drive vehicle, the plateau offers excellent opportunities for day hiking, camping, solitude, and photography. Nearby Beauty and Bald Peaks straddle the California-Nevada border and provide fantastic vistas of the area.

Masonic Historic Site: Accessible from the Masonic Road off of CA SR 182, northeast of Bridgeport, Masonic took its name from the Freemasons that opened the Pittsburg Liberty Mine in 1902. The site includes three towns, remnants of which can be found along the narrow wooded gulch the road follows. The three largest mines here were the Serita, Chemung, and Pittsburg Liberty, filling the towns with around 1,000 people at the height of production (1907-1910). The stamp mills ran on electricity generated from the nearby East Walker River. Today, the various springs and creeks provide for good birding and exploration of the historic sites.

Bodie State Historic Park: The most visited area in the Bodie Hills, Bodie State Historic Park is a destination for travelers from across the world. The historic town hosted about 10,000 people by 1879, and was one of the largest mining towns east of the Sierra until its bust around 1900. Mining steadily dwindled until production was almost nonexistent in 1916, and a fire in 1932 burned many old buildings down. The town is currently maintained in a state of "arrested decay" and has been protected as a State Park since 1962 (celebrating its 50th anniversary this year). The park features a Museum/Visitor Center, guided and self-guided tours, and is best visited during summer months. An entrance fee is charged year-round. There is much more information at www.parks.ca.gov/bodie.

When visiting any of the public lands in the Eastern Sierra and elsewhere, please remember to check road conditions before traveling. There are many areas of private land within and adjacent to public lands, so please respect no trespassing signs. Many roads are not maintained, and high clearance four-wheel drive vehicles may be necessary to access various parts of the Bodie Hills. The Bodie Hills contain many historic and pre-historic artifacts which are protected by federal law, so please practice Leave No Trace etiquette and leave objects where you find them. Also be mindful of wildlife; many animals, including sage grouse, have sensitive breeding and nesting times, so check with the local agency for restrictions and sensitive areas. Most of all, enjoy the great outdoors!

Bodie Cemetery

The Lives Within

The Friends of Bodie

The Friends of Bodie is a chapter of the Sierra State Parks Foundation, which is a non-profit organization. The Friends of Bodie is dedicated to the preservation and interpretation of the ghost town of Bodie. Many of the stones in the cemetery are missing due to theft, vandalism and weather, but The Friends of Bodie is working to prevent that in the future.

For more information, contact:

The Friends of Bodie
P.O. Box 515
Bridgeport, CA 93517
(760) 647-6564
www.friendsofbodie.org

The FRIENDS OF BODIE

- Please do not desecrate or disturb the graves.
- Do not touch or lean on the markers.
- Stay on designated paths.

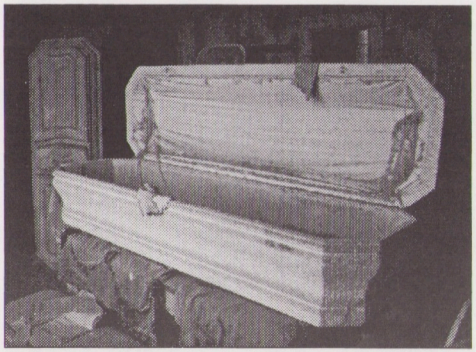
History of the Bodie Cemetery

The first Bodie cemetery was originally located about 880 feet east southeast of its present location around the old hospital and was called Boot Hill. However, the high water table in this area caused the graves to fill with water. In 1877, the cemetery was moved to its present location. Not all the early burials had monuments, and early markers turned up missing. As a result, an unknown number of graves remain in the original location. Before the establishment of a cemetery at Bodie, burials took place at nearby Aurora and Bridgeport.

The present site of the Bodie Cemetery consists of three discrete burial areas within the perimeter fence. The People's or Ward's Cemetery is located on the north end of the cemetery. The Freemasons or Masonic and the Miners' Union plots are on the south end. By 1880, the cemetery contained 160 graves: 109 in the Wards, 43 in the Miners' Union area and eight in the Masonic cemetery.

As of June 24, 1994, only 140 of the gravesites could be located. The last burial in the cemetery was June 18, 2003 when Robert "Bobby" Bell, born in Bodie in 1914, was interred. Due to Bodie's status as a landmark, there are less than ten Bodie residents left who may be buried here.

A cemetery fence not only defined the physical boundaries of the cemetery but also was an indication of the social status of the persons buried within. The area within the fence was



reserved for "respectable" citizens. Prostitutes, gunmen, illegitimate children and others "Outside the Pale of Decency," were buried outside the fence. Begin your tour near the building next to the dirt pathway.

This is the Heilshorn Morgue, known by local residents as the "Dead House." The building was used to store the hearses (east room) and coffins (west room) Rack for coffins are still in this room. When the ground was frozen during the winter, bodies were also kept there until the ground thawed or was blasted loose to allow graves to be dug. The hearses from this building can now be seen in the Bodie Museum.

At one point, a hole was broken in the southwest corner of the building. Coffins, mainly children's, were stolen. This hole was repaired by stabilization crews in the mid-1990s.
Now proceed up the path into the cemetery. Go uphill from the turnstile entrance to a fenced plot in the corner.

WARDS CEMETERY

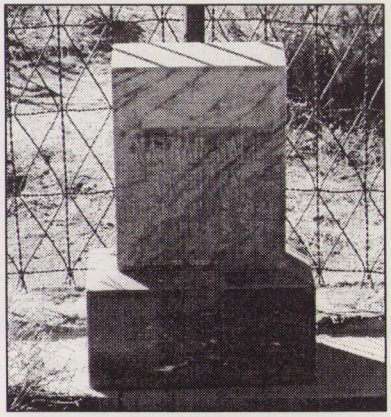
1. John W. DeChambeau
1875 – 1918

J. Emit DeChambeau
Born Nov. 6, 1900 - Died April 23, 1905
The DeChambeau Hotel still stands on Main Street in Bodie.

Go left to large plot.

2. Nathan Cook Gregory
Son of Nathan H. & Catherine C. Gregory
Jan. 12, 1887 - Sept. 22, 1890
Suffer little children to come unto me. Forbid them not, for such is the Kingdom of Heaven.

Nathan Hall Gregory
Nov. 19, 1841 – April 9, 1926
Life's work well done. He Rests in Peace



He operated a cattle ranch between Bodie and Aurora and maintained a residence still standing in Bodie today.

Catherine C. Gregory
May 14, 1854 – March 31, 1912
Weep not, for she is not dead, but sleepeth. Luke 8:52
Wife of Nathan H. Gregory (4), mother of Nathan Cook Gregory (3) The Gregory House is on Green Street. One of Nathan and Catherine's other children, Spence, was one of the last residents of Bodie.

Go left to tall monument.
3. Sacred Memory M.J.E. Boone
March 6, 1843 – Oct. 20 1881

This may have been a relative of Harvey Boone, a Bodie merchant, whose store can still be seen in town. His first wife was named Julia.

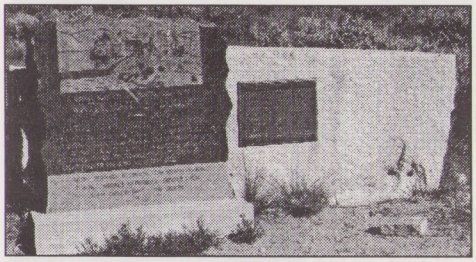
Go left to smaller monument
4. Anthony Thumann
Aug. 17 – Nov, 1883
Floor manager at Masonic Grand Balls

Go slightly uphill to left
5. James B. Perry
Native of Ireland
Died June 9, 1896 Aged 63 yrs
Odd Fellows emblem and All-Seeing Eye on shield. A spray of ivy.
Perry was a Mono County

Supervisor. The 1892 Bodie fire started in the restaurant building operated by Mrs. James Perry. On the 1880 census there is a James Perry listed as a miner, born in 1833. His wife was Thalina. However, he gave a birthplace of Iowa to the census worker.

Go uphill to large marker near fence line

6. William S. Bodey marker, placed by E Clampus Vitus in memory of the discoverer of gold in Bodie.



Let him repose in peace amid these everlasting hills.
Erected by Snowshoe Thompson Chapter ECV Oct. 5, 1957.
Buried here are the mortal remains of William S. Bodey, 1814 – 1859. Native of Poughkepsie, N.Y.
Bodey's remains, discovered 20 years after his 1859 death in a snowstorm, are said to be buried somewhere on this hillside; the exact location is not known. Bodey's name is controversial; some believe his first name may have been Wakeman or Waterman. The second marker (which has Waterman as his first name) was put in place in 1976 by Sharkey Begovich of Gardnerville, Nevada and California State Park Ranger Jim Stewart.

Turn and follow path back downhill

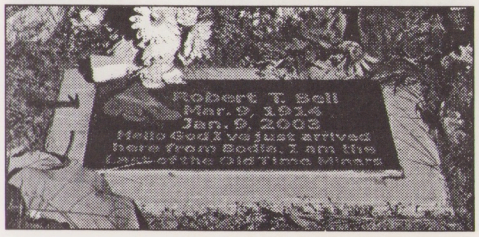
7. Clarence C. Birks
1897 – 1961
Father
Watchman 1958 – 1961
Birks was the last caretaker of Bodie, hired by the Cain family. He was born in North Dakota.

Proceed left to the large fenced family plot

8. Lester L. Bell
Jan. 24, 1888 – July 5, 1950
Operated the Standard Mill in later years. Known as "Honest Old Lester." It was said no matter how much gold passed through his hands, none of it stuck.

Louise Bell
Born May 23, 1884 – Died July 19, 1976
Wife of Lester L. Bell

Robert T. Bell
Hello God, I've just arrived here from Bodie. I am the Last of



the Old Time Miners
March 9, 1914 – Jan. 9, 2003
Bobby Bell, a second generation Bodieite, was one of the last miners to work in Bodie's mines and the Standard Mill. He worked as a park aide with state parks in the 1960s and 1970s to help stabilize the buildings. He contributed considerably to park history by his willingness to share information with park staff about his life and work. He was the son of Lester L. and Louise Bell.

Lester F. Bell
US Navy
1920 – 1977
Son of Lester L. and Louise Bell.

Go left to angel headstone
9. Evelyn, Beloved daughter of Fannie O. & Albert K. Myers
May 1, 1894 – April 5, 1897
White marble child angel, wreath in hand, wearing dress and heart locket. Also known as the "Angel of Bodie." She died after she was accidentally struck in the head with a pick axe while a drainage ditch was being dug around her house.

Go left
10. Annie C. Fouke
Wife of R.R. Fouke
July 19, 1859 – April 27, 1896
Native of Denmark
At the age of 23, Annie traveled from Denmark to Bodie to visit her sister. While she was here, she fell in love with Richard Fouke and had two beautiful daughters. She died tragically from complications of childbirth with her third daughter, who survived.

Proceed down the trail to left, toward fence between next section of cemetery.
11. Mary Elizabeth Butler
Elizabeth my wife; Mary; Elizabeth wife of B.F. Butler.
Died Nov. 24, 1878, Aged 30 yr.,

8 mo. 8 days

Thus star by star declined, Till all are passed away. As morning high and higher shines, To pure and perfect day.
Her obituary states that Mary was mourned by a large circle of friends after a long illness. The Butlers were one of the first families to settle in Bodie in 1860s.

Head downhill to the fence opening

Masonic Cemetery

Go uphill after entering gate

12. Edith Richards
April 9, 1876 – Jan. 23, 1906.
Died in a smallpox epidemic. Born Edith Turley in Bridgeport and married William B. Richards. They had three children born in Bodie: Walter B., Ada and Bertha. Second grave next to Edith was her Mother. Plaque donated by W.T. Richards in 1987.

Go right

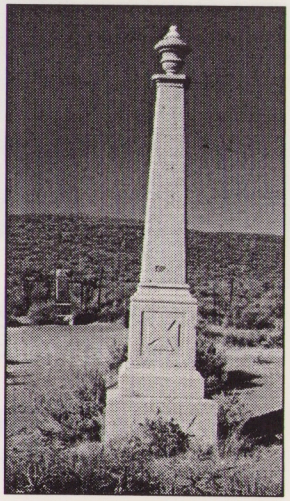
13. Lucille Edna Dolan
August 27, 1906 – Sept. 14, 1909
Daughter of Frank and Clara (Thompson) Dolan

Go slightly uphill

14. Solomon G. Stebbins
Died Oct. 20, 1881. Aged 56 yrs.
Native of N.Y.
Broken marble, Masonic emblem on top.
He served as a Bodie town constable for several years.

Go left to large monument

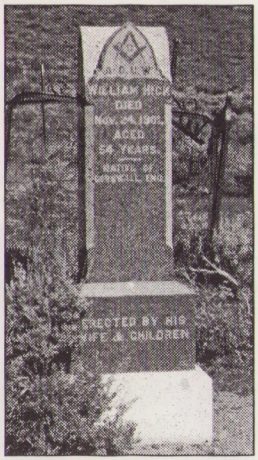
15. To the memory of James A. Garfield, President of the United States. Died Sept. 19, 1881. This stone was originally intended for W.S. Bodey, who first discovered gold here in 1859. When Bodey's remains were re-discovered in 1879, his



remains were interred in the cemetery and a stonecutter was hired to construct a monument. The stonecutter did not get paid and the monument was not erected. When Garfield was assassinated, the monument was appropriated from the town's namesake.

Turn right and go uphill

16. William Hick
Died Nov. 24, 1901. Age 54 yrs. Native of Cornwall, England. Masonic emblem on top. The A.O.U.W. stands for Ancient Order of United Workers.



At the time of his death, he was one of the oldest resident miners. He died of a punctured lung sustained in a mine accident. He left behind a wife and three children.

Go left

17. William T. Owens, "Billy"
Born Missouri 1855 – Died Bodie 1933
Owens was one of the last undertakers in town. A talent-

ed musician, he was considered the life of the party and often dressed in top hat and tails. Children enjoyed his company and listened eagerly to his tales of the old days. He enjoyed his evenings at the Bodie saloon and would be seen in early morning hours heading home with his lantern still lit. That earned him the nickname, "Daylight Billy." On the 1930 census, at age 75, his occupation was listed as "laborer – odd jobs."

18. Mrs. A.J. Johnson
Feb. 24, 1828 – Nov. 25, 1905
Arminda Johnson, mother of William T. Owens (17), was born in Missouri.

Go downhill

19. Wood Larson
Died Sept. 29, 1900. Aged 66 yrs, 7 mos. 18 days
At rest in loving remembrance
Died while visiting Bodie.
Son-in-law to Mrs. A.J. Johnson (18)

Head downhill to the fence opening

Miners Union Cemetery

In this area there are a number of infant and child graves. Pneumonia, cholera, smallpox and other diseases were contracted by many in town, but it was children who lacked the stamina and resistance to recover. The heartbreak of burying a child is evident in the epitaphs showing the years or months of the child's life.

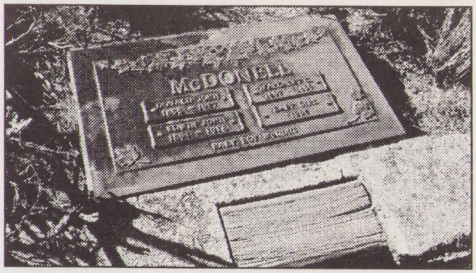
Go right, slightly uphill

20. Arthur E., son of B.I. & L.M. Barlow
Nov. 11, 1899. Aged 3 mos., 18 days.

21. George W., Son of J.A. & M.A. Conway
May 20, 1901, Aged 1 yr. 2 mos. 28 days
The Conway house still stands in town.

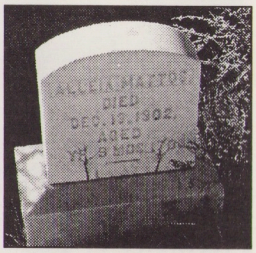
Go left on path to find the following graves

22. McDonnell
Donald John, 1855 – 1927
Edwin John 1894 – 1918
Margaret C. 1897 – 1899
Baby Girl 1908
Baby Boy McInnis
Anna Leslie McDonnell, March

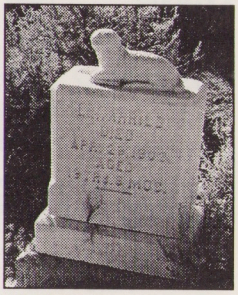


8, 1893, Aged 1 yr., 4 mos. 27 days (behind plot)

23. Alleia Mattos
Dec. 13, 1902, Age 1 yr., 9 mos., 17 days
Myrtle on reverse side



24. L. H. Arrild
April 29, 1903, 19 yrs., 8 mos.
He shall sleep but not forever



Go uphill to left

25. John Dolan Deignan
Died Sept. 19, 1889, Aged 38 yrs.
Brother

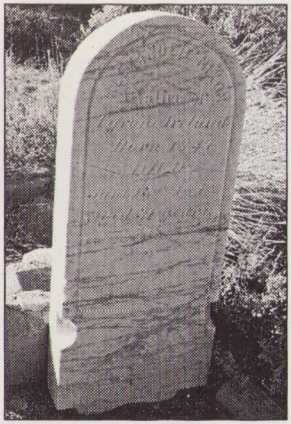
Go slightly uphill

26. Martha, beloved wife of

John Letcher
Born in Cornwall, England, in 1847. Died April 20, 1882, 35 yrs.
Her original gravestone read at bottom: *Amiable she won all, Intelligent she charmed all. Fervent she loved all, And dead she saddened all.*

Go left past unmarked graves to broken white gravestone

27. Alexander Nixon
Native of Tyrone, Ireland, Born 1847 – Died June 13, 1878, Aged 31 years.
Gone but not forgotten
He was the first President of the Bodie Miners Union. He was killed in a shootout in a saloon after he and friend Tom McDonald argued over who was the better man.



Turn downhill and go right

28. Name Unknown
Had he asked us, well we know. We should cry, oh spare this blow. Yes with streaming tears should pray. Lord we love him, let him stay.

Continue down path

29. Mateo Petralli
Nov. 10, 1850 – Feb. 2, 1915
Native of Switzerland

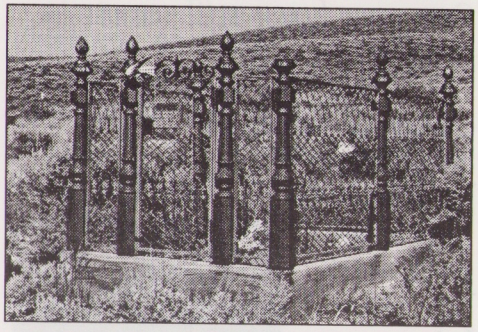
30. William T. Williams 1880
Infant, First of Family
Cenotaph (This word means the body is not actually buried here)

31. Annamaria Petralli
June 24, 1852 – June 30, 1915
Born in Switzerland, wife of Giacomo Petralli; sister-in-law to Mateo (29)

Proceed downhill to iron wrought fenced grave on left.

32. Lottie Johl
Lottie started her life in Bodie on Bonanza Street as a prostitute.

She married a local butcher, Eli Johl and they lived in town for many years. However, Lottie



was never accepted in social circles. When she died in November, 1899, her husband, Eli, fought hard to have her buried inside the cemetery with the "respectable" people. Bodie residents finally allowed Eli to bury Lottie at the far southwest corner of the cemetery.

Go downhill across the path to the large fenced plot

33. Steven A. Scanavino
April 19, 1895 – Dec. 20, 1970
He worked as an electrical engineer for several large firms.

Joe Scanavino
May 21, 1896 – April 19, 1955

David Scanavino
Dec. 15, 1903 – Nov. 8, 1921

Louis Scanavino
Died at Camp Sheridan, Alabama
1891 – 1918 U.S. Soldier

Joe Scanavino
Born 1842.
Died 1908
An Italian immigrant who spoke little English, he owned and operated the Goat Ranch south of Bodie for many years. Mono County hired a teacher to live and teach Scanavino's eight children at the ranch.

John Scanavino
Born Aug. 22, 1889 – Sept. 5, 1904

Continue right to family plot

34. James Gordon
Son of N.G. & M.A. Welsh
Sept. 19. 1907, Age 1 yr. 2 mos., 22 days

George W. Dolan (Two Dolan houses can still be seen in

town)
April 4, 1884 – Nov. 21, 1905
Son of James and Mary Dolan.

Dolan, Alatia 1889 – 1890;
Theresa 1888 – 1888;
Agnes 1888 – 1919;
Charles T. 1886 – 1890. Children of James and Mary Dolan.

Mary Dolan
April 10, 1851 – Feb. 3, 1917
She was born in Michigan and was the wife of James S. Dolan.

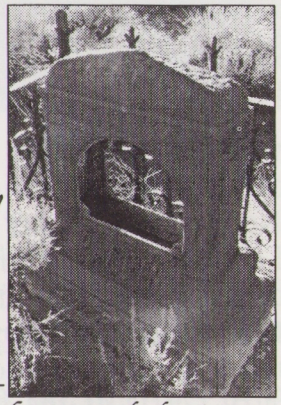
James S. Dolan
Jan. 1, 1841 – March 11, 1904
He was born in Ireland. His son, James P. Dolan was a Mono County Sheriff.

Harry F. Dolan 1880 – 1936
Son of James and Mary Dolan

James Edwin Dolan 1916 – 1917
Son of Harry F. Dolan.

Go downhill
37. Ernest Campana 1855 – 1923
Native of Switzerland
He was a day laborer according to the 1900 census. The Campana house still stands in Bodie.

Go uphill to hollow grave marker
38. Pagdin
Low iron fence with gate. The missing section reveals an unusually thick and hollow grave marker. Old-timers say hollow grave-stones were often used during Prohibition to hide bottles of liquor.



Look to left and right of Pagdin grave for next two graves.
39. Martha B.
Daughter of J.Z. & A. Lockwood
April 13, 1892, Aged 3 yrs, 15 days
Safe in the arms of Jesus

40. Eva M.
Daughter of J.Z. & A. Lockwood

March 12, 1892, aged 11 yrs, 5 mos. 2 days.
Asleep in Jesus! Blessed sleep.

Continue to right
41. Gustav A. Seiler
1888 – 1891
Augustus Seiler owned a saloon for many years in Bodie and his house can still be seen in Bodie.

42. W.H. Wereley
Brother We lay thee now to rest
Dec. 20, 1848 – Feb. 9, 1890
A Native of Ontario, Canada

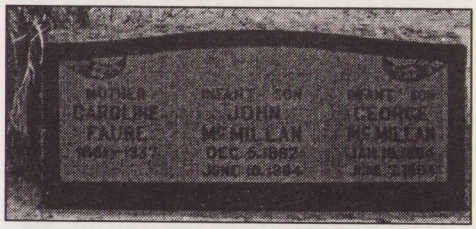
Turn and go downhill
43. G.C. Wood, 1848 – 1917
Mary Wood, 1847 – 1908

Go right
44. John S. McCracken
April 19, 1905, Age 45 yrs

Go downhill to right
45. Peter Noonan
Feb. 25, 1848 – July 10, 1894
Native of Ireland

Continue downhill to low dark stone

46. McMillan (at base)
"Mother" Caroline Faure 1861 – 1937. She was born in Missouri.



Infants: John McMillan, Dec. 5, 1882 – June 10, 1884;
George McMillan, Jan. 18, 1884 – June 7, 1884

Go right past two unmarked graves
47. Mary Louisa Moore
March 23, 1871 – April 26, 1891, Age 20 yrs. She died of heart failure.
A precious one from us has gone, A voice we loved is stilled; A place is vacant in our hearts, Which never can be filled.
Her parents were Fred and Mary Moore.

Go around Moore grave on left, headed uphill.
48. John B. Kennedy
July 11, 1902. Aged 39 yrs.
Arrived in San Francisco in 1851 and found his way to Bodie from there. He worked for many years as a butcher for the

town)
April 4, 1884 – Nov. 21, 1905
Son of James and Mary Dolan.

Dolan, Alatia 1889 – 1890;
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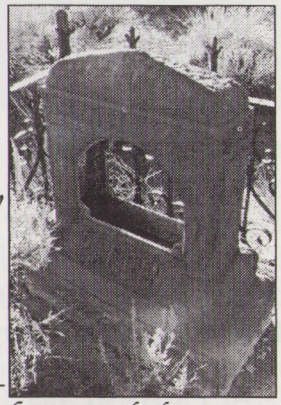

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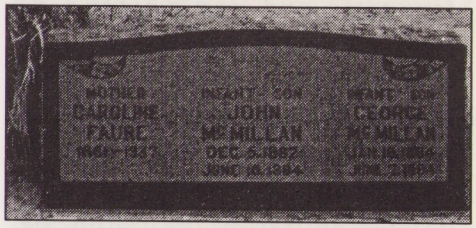

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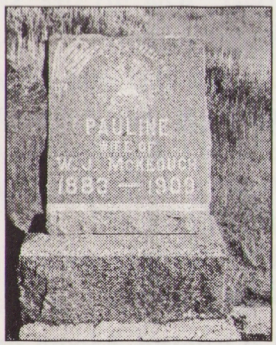
Go around Moore grave on left, headed uphill.
48. John B. Kennedy
July 11, 1902. Aged 39 yrs. Arrived in San Francisco in 1851 and found his way to Bodie from there. He worked for many years as a butcher for the

City Market. In the 1900 census, a John Kennedy is listed as a machinist. He was born in Minnesota and had a wife, Alice, and a son, George.

Go back through two gates to Wards Cemetery. Take lower left fork to next grave.
49. Duncan McIntyre
Died April 8, 1902. Aged 54 yrs.
Louisa May McIntyre (on back)
Died April 17, 1899. Aged 3 mos., 28 days.

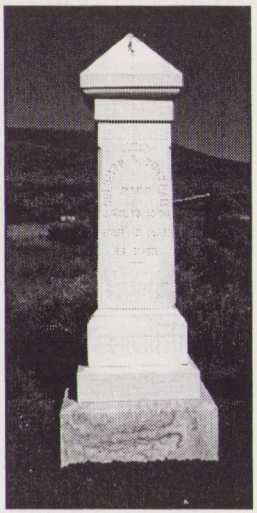
Go right
50. Pauline, wife of W.J. McKeough
1883 – 1909.
Alis Volat Propbis.
Erected by The Women of Woodcraft.



Kenneth L. McKeough
Son of Pauline Seiler McKeough and Walter James McKeough

Go right
51. In Loving Memory,
Christine
Daughter of George & Alice E. Parker
March 18, 1903 – Aug. 14, 1905
Gray with ivy on sides, white base

Solomon B. Burkham
Died Jan. 13, 1904, Aged 49 yrs, 16 days
Native of West Virginia
Solomon Burkham was owner of the merchandise store and also had stage transport contracts to Hawthorne, N.V
Odd Fellows Emblem



Mary L. Burkham,
Feb. 14 1860 – Jan. 17, 1945
Native of New York

Kathryn Lee Burkham
1892 – 1912
Daughter of Solomon and Mary Burkham.

Harlan V. Burkham
1883 – 1914
Son of Solomon and Mary Burkham

Go downhill on path to right to large fenced plot

52. Thomas Miller
Aug. 4, 1858 – Dec. 17, 1903
Father
Odd Fellows Emblem
Miller ran the Mono Mills Store. On the 1900 census, he was listed as
working as a teamster.

William D. Miller
California
Private 164 Depot Brig.
Feb. 7, 1933
Son of William and Annie Miller. Mrs. Miller's boarding houses can still be seen in town.

Mary A. Miller
1893 – 1963

Mother - In God's Care.
Wife of William D. Miller

Wm. Miller
Papa
Husband of Annie Miller

Turn downhill and exit fenced cemetery. Turn right and follow fence to next marker

53. Rosa May
Rosa May, born in Pennsylvania in January 1855, ran away at the age of 16. She drifted to New York and soon became a prostitute to survive. She moved to various mining camp brothels over the next two years, then moved on to Virginia City and Reno. In the early 1890s, she moved to Bodie. She was known for taking care of miners when they fell ill. It is thought that her death may have been caused by pneumonia after caring for sick miners. Because of her profession, she was buried outside the cemetery fence when she died in 1911 or 1912. This stone marker was placed in the mid-1960s by Louis Serventi, a descendent of a Bodie resident. It does not stand over her grave.

Climb to top of hill above graveyard on the south side if you wish to view the following grave.

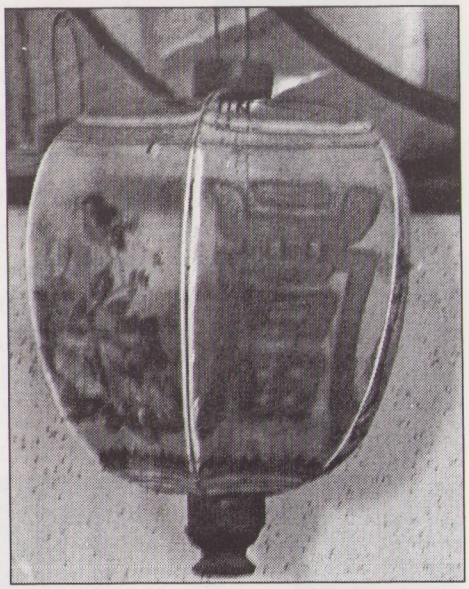
54. W.A.R. Loose

Warren Loose was born in Quincy, Illinois, August 6, 1848. Died in Bodie Aug. 19, 1917. Footstone says *Brother.* He arrived in Bodie in the late 1870s to join his brother Ed, who had located a claim called "The Bodie." They were joined by a third brother, William, in May 1877. Warren Loose was later part owner and manager of the Syndicate Mine. Warren was also known for suing Leland Stanford, former Governor of California, over the colt from a race horse. Loose sold the mare to Stanford not knowing she was in foal. When the colt was born, Loose claimed it. He lost the suit. The book, "Bodie Bonanza" was written by his son.

Chinese in Bodie

Nearly all the Chinese originally arrived in San Francisco and moved from camp to camp, many them coming to Bodie from Virginia City. Census takers in 1880 recorded close to 300 Chinese in Bodie; other estimates put the actual total higher.

Bodie's Chinatown was located in an area northwest of the central part of town. It was concentrated west of Prospect St. along King Street. The



Chinese owned and operated many businesses in this area as well as some in the main part of town. A few Chinese mined their own claims, which had been deserted by Euro-American miners. The Bodie Miners' Union and the Workingman's Party prohibited the Chinese from joining the union and working in the mines for the various companies.

Both the Chinese and Euro-American population began to decline as the economic downturn began in town. By 1900, the number of Chinese dropped to about 74.

Early Chinese cemeteries were marked by wooden headboards and inscribed with the name and often the location in China where the remains were to be sent for final burial. It was the belief of the Chinese immigrants that the final resting place of their dead must be in family plots in China. Burials in the United States were only temporary for many Chinese. The graves would be re-opened at a later date and the bones shipped to the deceased's home village when financially possible. According to their religious beliefs, the sprit of the dead person remains near the body, requiring care and attention from descendants.

Besides social customs, ethnic background was also a crucial factor in burials. Racial prejudice required that the Chinese be buried on the slope above the west perimeter fence where remains of a number of Chinese were said to have been buried.

In June 1994, a ground-penetrating radar survey showed no evidence of disturbances in the area known as the Chinese cemetery. Therefore, it is not certain whether this area was used as a cemetery for the Chinese.

Cemetery Symbols

Cemetery symbols used by stone carvers and monument companies from the 1700s onward included traditional and religious symbols Here's a list of some of them.

Angels of heaven: trumpeting they accompany the soul heavenward, announcing arrival.
Eye: Divine Wisdom (Mason)

Flowers: Impermanence
Calla Lilly – Majestic beauty
Daisy – Youth
Morning Glory – Resurrection
Lily – Purity, chastity
Pansy – Humility
Rose – Love
Shamrock – Holy trinity
Thistle – Fall of man

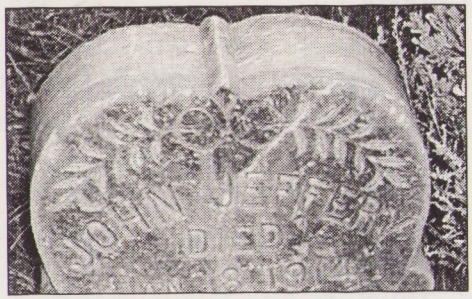
Gates: Passageway to heaven

Hands: Clasped, showing love and eternity.

Heart: The soul triumphant over death

Lamb: Symbol of Christ, the death of a child.

Laurel: Reward, glory



Plants: Heavenly garden
Ivy – immortality
Wheat – Death of an adult
Grapes – Blood of Christ
Pine Cone – Regeneration

Open Book: Divine knowledge

Sun: Glorified souls

Trees: Cut tree – death
Cypress – Hope
Weeping Willow – Sorrow

Urns: Death of an adult

In New England, during the 1700s and early 1800s, the Puritans had a very serious, gloomy view of death that was evident in epitaphs such as this one: As you are now, So once was I. As I am now, So shall you be. So prepare for death and follow me.

By the mid-1800s and 1900s, Victorians sentimentalized death using epitaphs such as: Gone but not forgotten.

Not forgotten...

The following people are said to be buried in Bodie, but the location of their graves is unknown. Some were buried in Boot Hill, outside the "respectable" cemeteries.

Eleanor Dumont - "Madame Mustache." Died Oct. 7, 1880. A respected woman who owned gambling houses throughout the west. It was said that in her establishments, foul language was allowed and only champagne was served. The dark fuzz above her lip gave her the name of Madame Mustache. When she arrived in Bodie after some unlucky times, she was desperate, turning to prostitution to survive. Her body

was found about two miles out of town with an empty bottle of poison.

William "Billy" O Hara - Died 1880. This African American at one time owned the Bunker Hill Mine (later known as the Standard) and owned the Empire Boarding House.

U.P. Jack - Died in a duel. Jan. 15, 1878

Jack O'Hara - Died of gunshot wounds when he and three others jumped a mining claim, August 27, 1878.

Andy Haggerday - Killed in the Champion Mine by falling timber,
Oct. 4, 1878.

Efrod Rodger Ryon - Slipped on ice and fell 450 ft. down the Bodie Mine shaft. As he fell, he called, "Clear the shaft," to warn those below. He was hailed as a hero by the newspapers. Feb. 6, 1879.

W. J. O'Brien - Died in the explosion of a powder magazine.
July 10, 1879.

J.R. Cassidy, H. Richards, Sam Martin, Manuel Garcia and Joseph Brodrier killed Oct. 9, 1879 when the brakes failed on the Tioga Mine cage, which plummeted 520 feet.

Thomas Travis, Jan. 1, 1880. He was knifed by Tom Dillon. As he lay dying, he fired one shot, critically wounding Dillon, who survived. Dillon was tried for murder, but was released for lack of evidence.

James Kennedy, July 5, 1880. His fumbled draw and bad aim put him six feet under.

Chatto Encinos, July 1880. Killed by Sam Chung for raiding his vegetable garden.

Bob Whiteacre, Sept. 2, 1880. Assassinated by George Watkins.

George Watkins, Sept 3, 1880. Committed suicide in his jail cell by drinking a bottle of poison.

Duncan McRay, Arthur Jackson, Hugh Smith, John Blake. All killed by a fire at the Goodshaw Hoisting Works, Nov. 8, 1880.

Thomas Treloar, January 1881. Shot by Joseph DeRoche, when Treloar objected to DeRoche dancing with his wife. DeRoche was lynched by a vigilante committee a few days later.

James Blair, Died in a duel, Jan. 18, 1878.

Antone Valencis, died 1878. Shot by Jesus Revis.

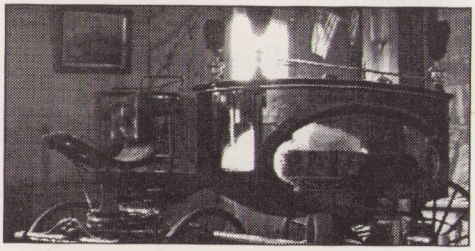
James Doyle, killed in the Bodie Mine, June 19, 1878

John Goff, shot in a claim-jumping dispute, Aug. 23, 1879.

Almond Parks, fell 50 feet down the Black Hawk Mine shaft, October 1879.

A.C. Robertson, Feb. 1880 at the Spaulding Mine. Tried to thaw out frozen powder in his oven.

John Enright, shot and killed by James Harrington in Teagues Saloon Sept. 3, 1878. John fired the first shot and missed. James didn't.



FURNITURE—UNDERTAKING.

H. WARD.

I. O. O. F. BUILDING,

(BODIE, CALIFORNIA.)

DEALER IN

FURNITURE

Bedding and Carpets, Wall Paper and Window Shades, Paints, Oils, Varnish and Glass, Pictures and Picture Frames,

TOILET SETS, CABINET HARDWARE, ETC.

Furniture Repaired.

CHAS. H. KELLY & CO.,

LEADING

UNDERTAKERS,

MAIN STREET, BODIE.

Everything in the undertaker's line fully attended to. Embalming and the preparation of bodies for transportation will receive special attention. je29tf

H. WARD,

UNDERTAKER!

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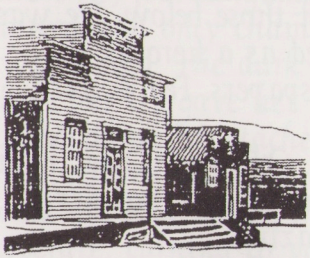
(I. O. O. F. Building, Bodie, Cal.)

LONG EXPERIENCE IN THE UNDERTAKING business enables me to give it the proper attention.

Special care taken in preparing bodies for transportation.

COFFINS, CASKETS AND SHROUDS Always on hand.



The FRIENDS OF BODIE

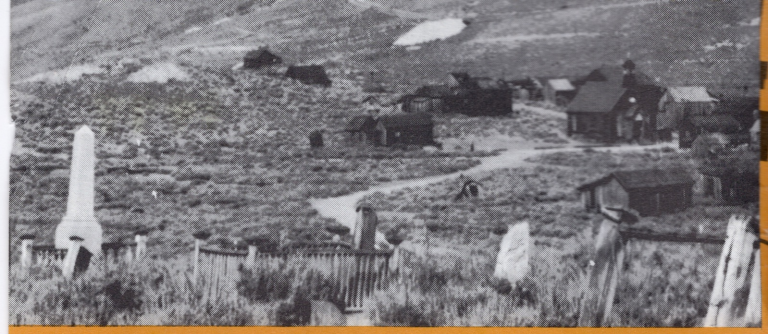
1979

BODIE

STATE HISTORIC PARK

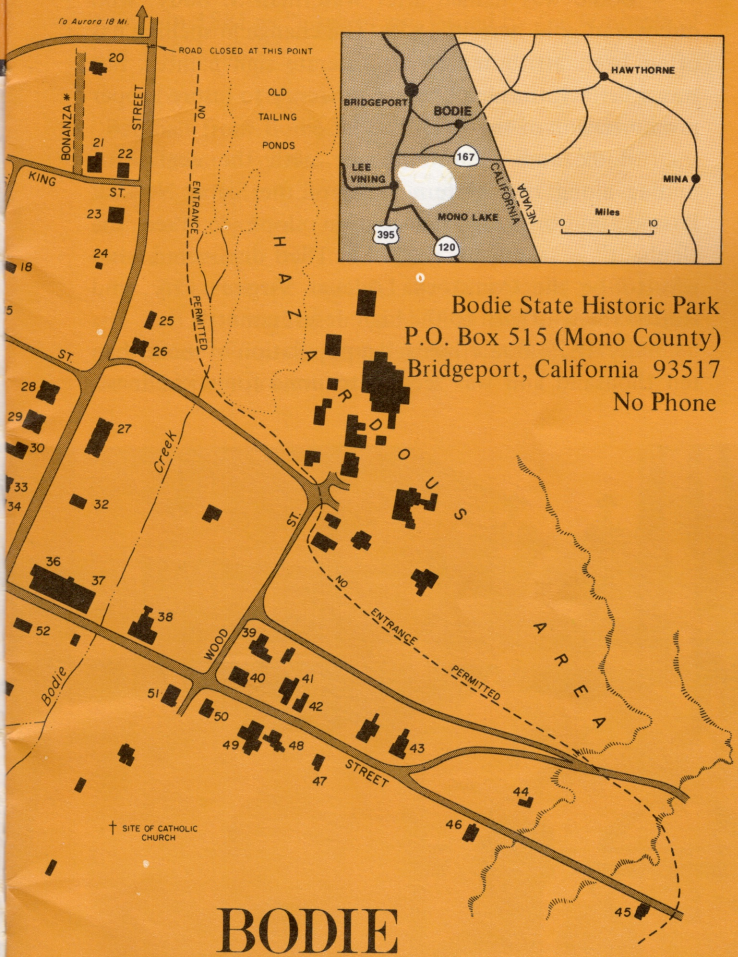
#51 Spence Gregory
#55 Grandma Johnson

disturb nothing
take only photos



WHEN YOU VISIT

Bodie State Historic Park is best visited during the summer. At other times the weather is unpredictable, and off-season visitors are cautioned to check at Bridgeport, Mono County seat, for road and weather conditions before making the trip. The park is on Bodie Road 13 miles east of its junction with State Highway



Bodie State Historic Park
P.O. Box 515 (Mono County)
Bridgeport, California 93517
No Phone

BODIE
STATE HISTORIC PARK

395, seven miles south of Bridgeport.

When you take your walk through old Bodie, please stay on the streets and sidewalks – most of the buildings are unsafe. Do not enter hazardous areas posted to prohibit public entry. Also, we ask that you *do not smoke,* except in parking areas – fire is an ever-present danger here.

WELCOME TO BODIE

This is Bodie – or rather the remains of Bodie. Only about five percent of the buildings it contained in its 1880 heyday still remain; it stands just as time, fire, and the elements have left it – a genuine California gold-mining ghost town. Designated a State Historic Park in 1962, it is now maintained in a state of "arrested decay."

Bodie was named after Waterman S. Body, who discovered gold here in 1859. The change in spelling has often been attributed to an illiterate sign painter, but was a deliberate change by the citizenry to insure proper pronunciation of the town's name.

Bodie rose to prominence with the decline of mining along the western slope of the Sierra Nevada. Prospectors crossing the eastern slope to "see the elephant" – search for gold – in 1858 discovered what was to be the Comstock Lode at Virginia City, and started the wild rush to the high desert country.

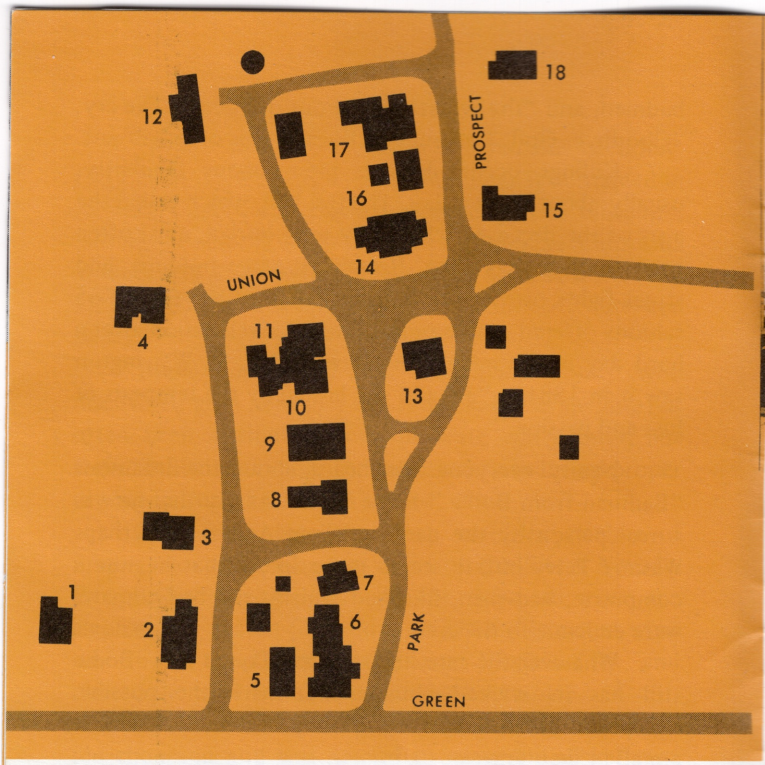
By 1879 Bodie boasted a population of more than ten thousand and was second to none for wickedness,

badmen, and "the worst climate out of doors." The cry, "Goodbye, God, I'm going to Bodie," was only half jest.

Killings occurred with monotonous regularity, usually about once a day. The fire bell, which tolled the ages of the deceased when they were buried, must often have rung all day long. Robberies, stage holdups, and street fights provided a little variety, and the town's 65 saloons offered ample opportunity for relaxation after a hard day at the mines. The Reverend F. M. Warrington saw it in 1881 as "a sea of sin, lashed by the tempests of lust and passion."

Nearly everyone has heard about the infamous "Badman from Bodie." Some historians say that he was a real person by the name of Tom Adams or perhaps Washoe Pete, but it seems more likely that he was a composite; bad men, like bad whisky and bad climate, were endemic to the area.

Whatever the case, the streets are quiet now. Bodie still has its wicked climate, but with the possible exception of an occasional ghostly visitor, its badmen are all in their graves.



A WALK THROUGH OLD BODIE

The following numbered paragraphs correspond to the numbered posts along the walk and to the numbers on your map.

1 DOLAN HOUSE.

2 The old METHODIST CHURCH was erected in 1878-79 at the peak of Bodie's boom. Reverend Hinkle was its first minister. This is the only church still standing in Bodie, and the only Protestant church erected. E. J. Clinton of San Francisco restored the church and held the last service here in 1932. Since then the interior has been badly vandalized, and the Ten Commandments painted on oilcloth – "Thou Shalt Not Steal" – which once hung behind the pulpit has been stolen. The Catholic church on Wood Street, built around 1878, burned down in 1928.

3 DAN MacDONALD HOUSE.

4 METZGER HOUSE. Henry Metzger, born in New York in 1860, came to Bodie in 1878 to work in the Standard Mill and was its foreman when it closed down about 1916. Two of his seven children were born in this house.

Return to Green Street.

5 TOM MILLER HOUSE.

6 A RESIDENCE OF JAMES STUART CAIN, who arrived in Bodie when he was 25 and entered the lumber business, putting barges on Mono Lake to transport timber to the Bodie mines. He expanded into wagon freighting and, with Thomas Holt, leased the Bodie Railroad and Lumber Company. He and Joe Maguire leased a block of ground from Standard Mine and Mill and took out $90,000 in gold in 90 days; Standard would not renew the lease, but later Cain acquired the company through court action and became the town's principal property owner.

Turn left at Park Street.

7 The small SAWMILL was used for cutting firewood. It required plenty of firewood to keep the poorly constructed houses warm during the severe Bodie winter – 30 - to 40 - degrees - below - zero temperatures, winds to a hundred miles an hour, and snow sometimes twenty feet deep. The inhabitants were not prepared for the winter of 1878-79, one of the worst in Bodie's history, and many died from exposure, disease, or violence. Preparing for a Bodie winter was, and still is, a monumental task.

8 The HOUSE OF CHARLIE DONNELLY, a butcher, who married English artist Annie Pagdin. It was later occupied by E. W. Billeb and his wife, Dolly, daughter of James S. and Martha Cain. Mr. Billeb was the last superintendent and manager of the old Bodie and Benton Railroad (later the Mono Lake Railway and Lumber Company). The garden in front of his house was the only green spot in town; hops grown there were said to be the only green plants that could survive in Bodie.

9 SEILER HOUSE. Seiler owned a saloon on the corner of Union and Main Streets.

10 CAMERON HOUSE, later the residence of James Stuart Cain.

11 HOUSE OF LESTER E. BELL, who was in charge of the cyanide plant built by Alex McCone and James Cain, then the largest such plant in the United States. The cyanide process of extracting gold, perfected in Bodie, enabled the working of mine tailings for gold. Bell's son, Lester L. Bell, became an assayer for Bodie's mining companies.

12 TOM MILLER BARN AND ICE HOUSE.

13 MENDOCINO HOUSE.

14 HOUSE OF PAT REDDY, an able criminal lawyer. Though he had but one arm, Reddy built a considerable reputation on his ability to defend the lawless element of Bodie.

15 MURPHY HOUSE.

16 BOB BELL'S MACHINE SHOP. Bob, son of Lester L. Bell, was born in Bodie and worked in its mines. For the past several years he has worked on restoring and stabilizing Bodie's buildings for the Department of Parks and Recreation.

17 HOME OF STUART KIRKWOOD, owner of the stables (Site No. 22). This house was also occupied by E.L. Benedict, former manager of the Bodie Bank (Site No. 24).

18 MOYLE HOUSE. The Moyle brothers had a business on Main Street.

Continue on Prospect Street and on down the hill to King Street and the site of the once-large Chinatown.

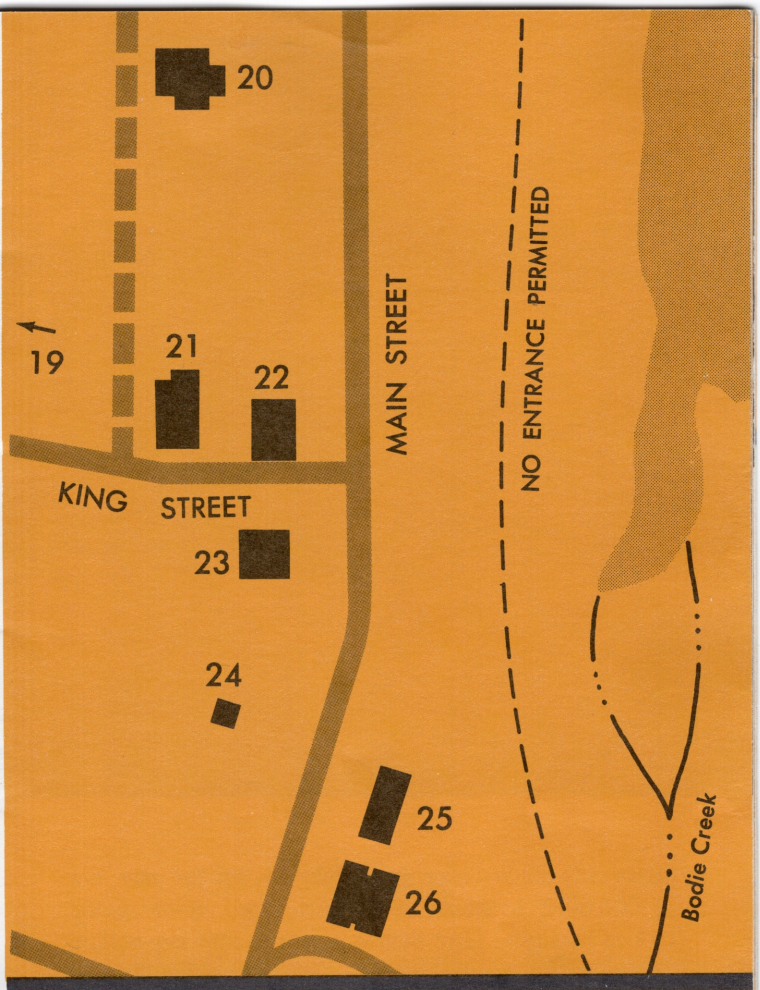
19 CHINATOWN, where the Chinese were content to live apart with their own customs and traditions. On a narrow street lined on both sides by wooden buildings, they ran laundries, peddled vegetables (shipped in by express) and once brought in and sold all the wood used in the town. Bodie's Chinatown had its own joss house, tongs, opium dens, and faro and fantan games.

Ahead of you are the sites of Bonanza Street, Maiden Lane, and Virgin Alley. Many of the town's "ladies" – The Beautiful Doll, Eleanor Dumont (alias Madame Mustache), Rosa May, Emma Goldsmith, Nellie Monroe, French Joe – lived here.

20 MASTRETTI LIQUOR WAREHOUSE.

21 The TOWN JAIL may not look like much now, but it had its day – only one prisoner is known to have escaped. Bail for "guests" was $5. DeRoche was taken from here by the Bodie "601", a vigilante group, and hanged.

22 The STUART KIRKWOOD LIVERY STABLE and blacksmith shop. In 1879-80, when Bodie was at its peak, it had ten thousand inhabitants. To feed, clothe, and supply this population, teams and wagons hauled in tons of goods daily.


20
19
21
22
MAIN STREET
NO ENTRANCE PERMITTED
KING STREET
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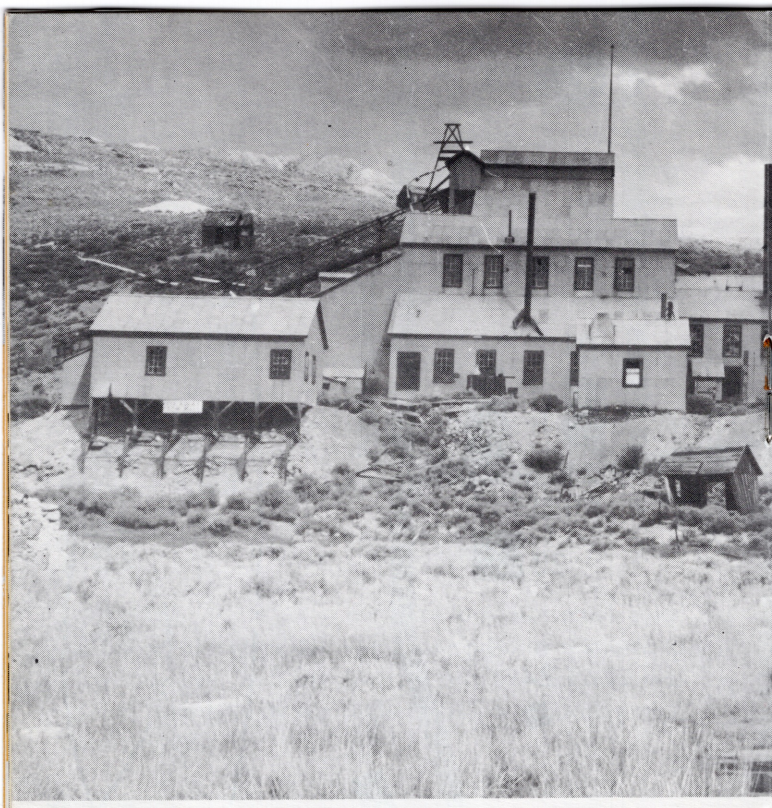
26
Bodie Creek



Main and King Streets.

From this point the road leads north through Bodie Creek Canyon and goes on seven miles to the California-Nevada border. It passes the Blanchard Toll House a couple of miles out of town. The junction with the road to Aurora, Nevada, where Mark Twain once lived while prospecting the Esmeralda outcroppings, is fourteen miles north of Bodie (make inquiries before attempting to travel over this road).

From here you can see the Standard Mine and Mill on the west slope of Bodie Bluff. Because the old mine buildings and surrounding area are extremely unsafe, they are closed to the public. The mine was known as the Bunker Hill Mine when it was registered in August 1859. It passed through several hands before being sold for $67,500 to four partners who changed the name and incorporated as the Standard Company in April 1877.

The Standard Mine yielded nearly $15 million over 25 years, and its success caused the 1878 rush to Bodie. In a year the population rose from about twenty to an estimated ten thousand miners, gamblers, and other entrepreneurs. The mill was destroyed by fire in 1898

but was rebuilt the following year. While the boom lasted, some thirty companies produced $400,000 in bullion per month for an overall total estimated at $90 to $100 million.

The James S. Cain Company owned the Midnight Mine next to the Standard, and in 1915 it was proved in court that the management of the Standard Company had deliberately and fraudulently tapped the Midnight property. The damages awarded were so great that Cain took over the Standard property.

Hank Blanchard operated a lime kiln twelve miles from Bodie, in Mono Lake Basin about a mile and a half from the siding of the Bodie and Benton Railroad. Paiute Indians working at the kiln would haul the sacked lime to the siding and load it on flatcars for delivery at the Bodie terminal of the railroad, on the hill east of town; from there it was hauled to the Standard Company limehouse for use in milling and cyaniding gold and silver ores.

To the right of the mill was the residence of Theodore Hoover, brother of Herbert Hoover and general manager of the Standard Consolidated Mining Company. He later became director of the School of Mines at Stanford University.

Head down Main Street.

23 Remains of the MOYLE WAREHOUSE, one of the large stone warehouses constructed to store supplies for the long, cold Bodie winters. Some of the stone buildings were built into excavations blasted out of the hillside, and rooms or chambers were formed out of the rubble.

24 This is the site of the BODIE BANK, which James S. Cain bought from E. L. Benedict in 1890. The bank escaped the fire of 1892 but was destroyed in that of 1932; all that you see here are the remains of the vault. It was robbed on September 1, 1916, by four men who got away with $4,000 in money and jewelry.

The other bank which Bodie boasted during its boom days, the Mono County Bank, was organized in 1877 by Timothy Hopkins, adopted son of Mark Hopkins of "Big Four" and Central Pacific fame. It operated until 1884, when it closed with all accounts settled in full.

25 Across the street is the site of the MASONIC HALL. Bodie Lodge No. 252, F. & A.M., received its dispensation July 30, 1878, and its charter October 16, 1879, at which time there were 13 members. It reached its peak of 93 members in 1882 and passed from existence in 1918 when the remaining members voted to consolidate with Winnecumah Lodge No. 287 of Bishop.

26 Site of the U.S. HOTEL.

Main Street, once a solid mile of one- and two-story frame buildings, is well described by this quote from *the Saga of Wells Fargo*:

"At the high noon of its great days there were 30 mines in operation in Bodie . . . and the saloons, pothouses, restaurants, gin mills, ale stoops, and allied and adjacent deadfalls

averaged, according to the advertising columns in the Bodie *Standard*, something better than one to a mineshaft. Having dined at Stewarts Hotel, the Arlington, the Bodie House, Browns or . . . the Occidental (Site No. 27), Grand Central or Windsor, the workingman off duty was confronted by a bewildering choice of oases on which to lavish his patronage. He had his choice of Wagner's Corner, the Parole Saloon, the Rifle Club, the Cabinet, the Senate, the Commercial, the Champion, Peters and Aldriges, the Gymnasium, Mark's Saloon, the Sawdust Corner (Site No. 28), or the Bonanza. At all of these, the products of the town's three breweries – the Bodie, the Pioneer, the Pat Fahey's – were the favored chasers.

". . . There was almost sure to be a company of *East Lynne* or *Ten Nights in a Bar Room*, both prime favorites, performing at the Miner's Union Hall. And, after the show, at an hour when life was really in order, the prudent reveler could save his final and best thirst of the evening to be dissipated at one or both of the town's ranking resorts of quality and fashion: The Maison Doree Restaurant, where the best quail in aspic in all the Esmeralda region was served for supper, or the Philadelphia Beer Depot, opposite to Wells Fargo, the handsomest saloon in Bodie and patronized by all classes – sandwiches for customers at all hours. The river of life flowed at its fullest in Bodie, both around and through its citizens."

27 Site of the OCCIDENTAL HOTEL, which was owned by Warren Boyd. The ruins of a stone warehouse are still visible, and the Occidental Stable across the creek is still standing.

28 Site of the SAWDUST CORNER SALOON. The 1932 fire was set in a building at the rear of the Saloon.

29 Site of the SODERLING ASSAY OFFICE, on the west side of Main Street. Soderling was reported to have gone to Germany to learn the cyanide process and became an expert in this field. His first assay office, on the other side of the street, burned down in 1892.

30 BARBER SHOP.

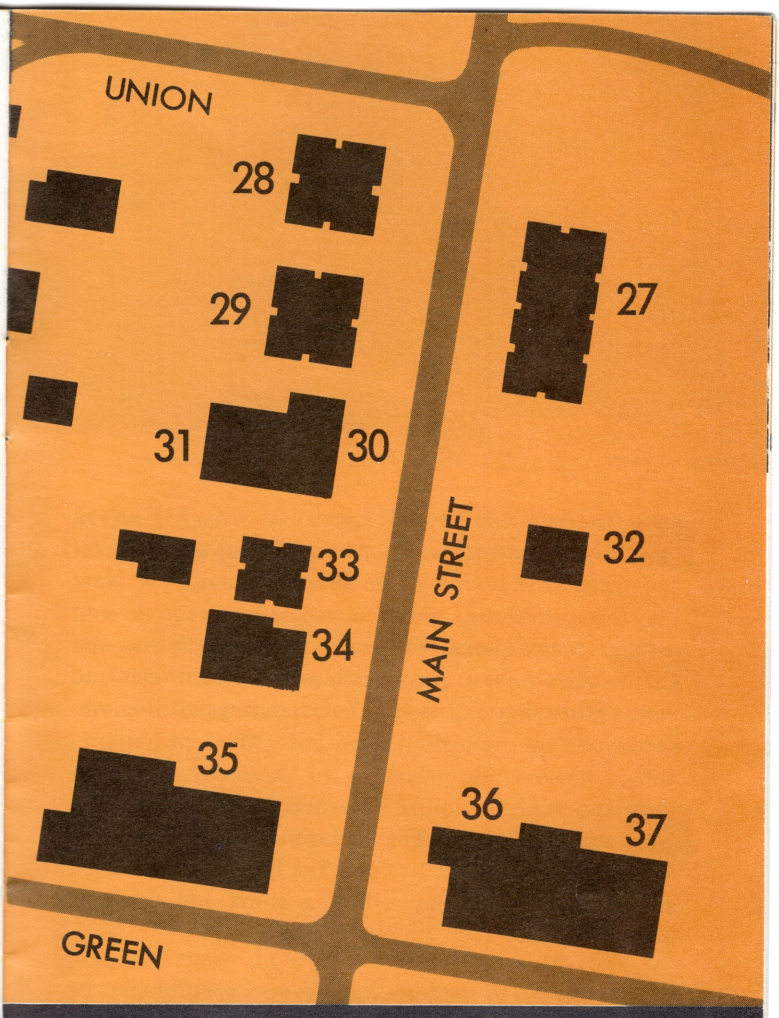
31 SAM LEON BAR.

32 The FIREHOUSE. The big fire of July 25, 1892 wiped out all but a few buildings of the town's business district. Then on June 23, 1932, a small boy playing with matches started another fire. Both times there was plenty of water available and the fires could have been stopped, but the screens at the reservoirs had not been replaced after cleaning and the pipes were clogged with rocks and mud.

Across the street was the Wells Fargo express office. One shipment of gold by the Standard Company amounted to $500,000 and was guarded by six Wells Fargo messengers – two on horseback in front of the stage, two behind the stage, and two in the stage. The stage had been held up several times, and nothing exceeding $500 in value could be shipped without an armed messenger. The route of travel was from Bodie to Aurora, through Wellington, and then Gardnerville to Carson City, where the bullion was either delivered to the mint or shipped to San Francisco.

33 CARPENTER SHOP.

34 LOTTIE JOHL HOUSE. Lottie began her career in the red-light district but achieved respectability as a painter and the wife of a local butcher. In 1932, the postoffice was located here; Mrs. Mary McDonnell was postmistress.


UNION
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MAIN STREET
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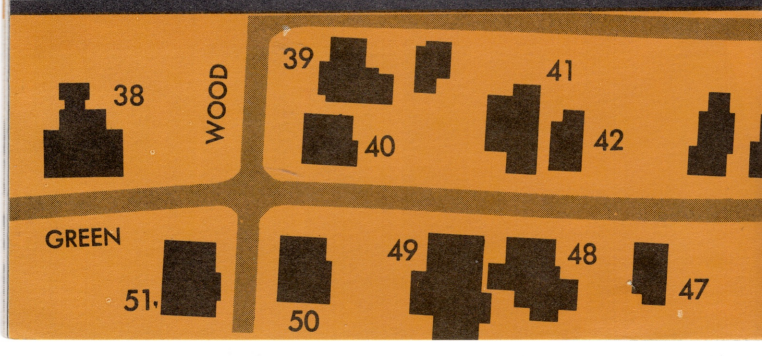
37
GREEN

35 The BOONE STORE AND WAREHOUSE served as a general store. Boone was a great horse fancier and owned the Boone Stable and Livery business. Note the five-gallon cans used as siding – kerosene and gasoline were hauled to Bodie from Hawthorne and Carson City in these cans, which were then cut open and used for roofing and siding. Later, corrugated iron was used.

36 U.S. LAND OFFICE, later Wheaton & Hollis Hotel and Bodie Store. The land office was run by Agent M. J. Cody, father of Ella Cain. The building later served as the Power Company office, a store, and finally a boarding house.

Turn left at the corner on Green Street.

37 HYDROELECTRIC BUILDING AND POWER STATION. Energy for the mills was first derived from steam generated by wood-fire boilers. When wood for fuel became scarce and uneconomical Tom Legget, superintendent of the Standard Company, with James Cain's backing, proceeded on his theory that electricity could be transmitted over wires from a distance. A hydroelectric plant was built 13 miles from Bodie, on Green Creek above Bridgeport, which developed 6,600 volts and 13 horsepower. When the day arrived to test



Legget's theory, word was flashed over the telephone line put up parallel to the power line (many of the original poles and some of the lines, which were installed in a straight line as it was feared the electricity would not be able to turn corners, still stand) and the switch was thrown. The generators began to hum and the first motor to be operated over long-distance power lines was initiated in Bodie. The news flashed around the world, and from Rhodesia to Australia offers came to the engineers to build hydroelectric plants. The Standard Company was the first mine to operate an electric hoist in Bodie.

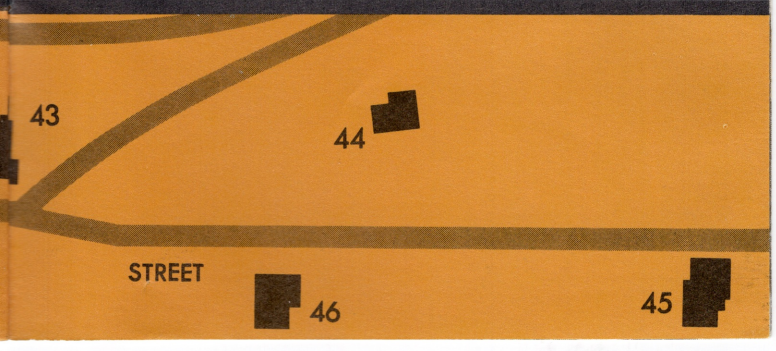
38 The SCHOOLHOUSE building, built in 1879, was originally the Bon Ton Lodging House; the first school, located two blocks up the street, was burned down by an early-day juvenile delinquent. Belle Moore, wife of Ben Butler, was Bodie's first schoolteacher.

39 QUINVILLE HOUSE.

40 DR. STREET'S HOUSE.

41 MILLER ROOMING HOUSE (Mrs. Miller also had the boarding house across the street, Site No. 49).

42 BOB CONWAY'S HOUSE.



43 SELHORN HOUSE.

44 DOG FACE GEORGE'S HOUSE.

45 McINNIS HOUSE.

46 GORDON HOUSE.

47 GARRATY HOUSE.

48 JIM TODD HOUSE.

49 MRS. MILLER'S (other) BOARDING HOUSE.

50 McMILLIAN HOUSE.

51 SPENCE GREGORY HOUSE.

Return to Main Street and proceed left.

52 PRIVATE CASINO.

53 SITE OF BOTTLE WORKS.

54 COUNTY BARN.

55 The POSTOFFICE moved here from Silas Smith's store on northeast Main Street, where it had been located since 1877, when this building was erected in 1879 by Postmaster George Putnam. Then it served as

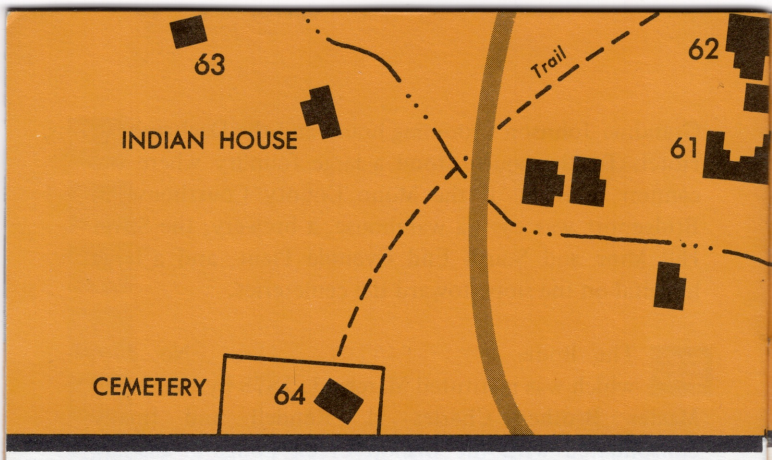
Grandma Johnson's rooming house and the Dechambeau Hotel. To the south stood a large foundry where the cannon in front of the Mono County Courthouse in Bridgeport was cast, a warehouse, a brewery, the Silver Hill Mine and South End Cyanide Plant, and a large hospital on the slope toward the cemeteries.

56 The Bodie ODD FELLOWS LODGE, No. 279, which was instituted March 11, 1878 by the Grand Master Brother Charles H. Rendell and finally consolidated with the Bishop Creek Lodge at Bishop, used the upper floor of this building. The first floor was used by H. Ward, who put the building up in 1880, for his undertaking business; it was also used by the Bodie Athletic Club.

57 The MINERS' UNION HALL, built in 1878, served as the center of much of Bodie's social life. The annual Fourth of July Grand Ball, the elegant masquerade ball on Washington's Birthday (when it invariably snowed), and the Christmas party for young and old were held here. The Miners' Union Local 61, Western Federation of Miners, was organized December 22, 1877, and was one of the first organized unions in California. The building now houses a museum.

58 This building was last used as a MORGUE – note the caskets inside.

Turn left, up Green Street.



On your left, in the field, was a blacksmith shop and a barn large enough to accommodate a hundred horses. From this shop a huge frame, normally used for raising wagons and setting large iron wagon tires, was moved to the intersection of Main and Lowe Streets for the lynching of DeRoche, who reportedly murdered Johnny Treboar. An investigation into DeRoche's death was made, and the justice of the peace's record states, "Case dismissed, as the defendant was taken out and hanged by a mob."

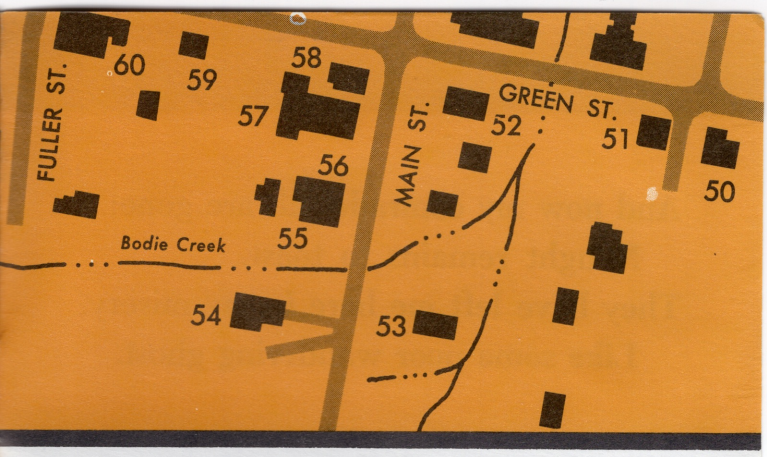
59 SADDLE ROOM.

60 This old red BARN is typical of the large barns used throughout Bodie.

61 STURGEON'S HOUSE.

62 The HOUSE OF DAVID VICTOR CAIN, who was born in Carson City. He lived in this house, built in 1873, after he married Ella M. Cody in 1904.

63 Ahead (west) is PEARSON SPRINGS, once known as Taylor Gulch. This may have been the site of Body's cabin, where he discovered gold in 1859 in company with three prospector companions, but more likely his cabin was on the east side of Bodie Bluff, where placer gold was discovered in Taylor Gulch on the



east side of Silver Hill. In the winter of 1859 Body and Black Taylor set out for Monoville for supplies and became lost in a blizzard on the way back; Body's strength gave out and he died. The following spring Taylor found and buried his bones. He was later reburied in the Masonic Cemetery.

64 To your left across the sagebrush are WARD'S CEMETERY, the MASONIC CEMETERY, the MINERS' UNION CEMETERY, and the CHINESE CEMETERY. Only those accepted as respectable were buried inside the fences surrounding all but the Chinese Cemetery . . . others were buried in "Boot Hill" outside the fences, and in most cases without markers. Waterman S. Body, the founder of the town, is buried without the gravestone that was carved for him . . . but that's another story! Body finally received recognition on October 5, 1957, when a large granite block was placed on his grave with a plaque dedicated by E Clampus Vitus.

This completes your historic walk through Old Bodie. We hope you have enjoyed your visit.

The road ahead goes northwest to Masonic, California and to roads connecting with Sweetwater and Wellington, Nevada. Make inquiries before attempting to travel over this road.

And now my comrades all are gone;
Naught remains to toast.
They have left me here in my misery,
Like some poor wandering ghost.

James S. and Martha Cain

State of California–the Resources Agency
department of parks & recreation
P.O. Box 2390 ◦ Sacramento, 95811 6/79

Bodie local history binder

Compiled by Bob Larson (1934-2024).

Collection of magazine articles, newspaper clippings, and other printed ephemera related to the mining ghost town and California State Park of Bodie, Mono County, California.

Item compiled by/from the collection of Robert Wood "Bob" Larson (1934-2024). Bob Larson was a teacher at Salinas High School in Salinas, California for many years. He inherited his aunt Enid A. Larson's home in Big Pine, Inyo County, California in 1991, and permanently relocated to Big Pine in 2013. He continued his aunt Enid's penchant for Owens Valley History, and he collected articles and books on the natural and human history of Inyo County.

From the Inyo County Free Library Local History Room Collection. Scanned by the Inyo County Free Library in March 2026.

Background (from Wikipedia):

"Bodie is a ghost town in the Bodie Hills east of the Sierra Nevada mountain range in Mono County, California, United States. It is about 75 miles (121 km) southeast of Lake Tahoe, and 12 mi (19 km) east-southeast of Bridgeport, at an elevation of 8,379 feet (2,554 m). Bodie became a boom town in 1876 (150 years ago) after the discovery of a profitable vein of gold; by 1879 it had established 2,000 structures with a population of roughly 8,000 people.

The town went into decline in the subsequent decades and came to be described as a ghost town by 1915. The U.S. Department of the Interior recognizes the designated Bodie Historic District as a National Historic Landmark.

Also registered as a California Historical Landmark, the ghost town officially was established as Bodie State Historic Park in 1962. It receives about 200,000 visitors yearly. Bodie State Historic Park is partly supported by the Bodie Foundation."

Binder contents (in order of appearance):

Cover: Bodie State Historic Park pamphlet cover; "The Badman From Bodie" illustration

Room to Roam – Trails & Ghost Towns – Mineral County, Nevada map

Pamphlet: The Bodie Hills – An American Treasure

Newspaper clipping of Bodie building in arrested decay (unknown publication)

Receipt from Bodie State Historic Park dated 20 August 2012

Unknown periodical clipping - image of rusting car with caption: “Once a booming gold rush town of more than 10,000 residents…”

Unknown periodical clipping - Image of Bodie church

Newspaper clipping: *The Sheet* (Mammoth Lakes, Mono, California), 24 Aug 2019 [hand-dated]: “There’s Gold in Them Hills! – Application to mine the Bodie Hills causes backlash” by Page and Hite.

Unknown periodical clipping: “A Cold One Please – The bar at the Dechambeau Hotel in Bodie, CA.”

Newspaper clipping: *Inyo Register* (Bishop, Inyo, California), 19 Jul 2014. “Mules haul wood to the booming mining town of Bodie in the early 1900s.” A.A. Forbes photo.

Unknown newspaper clipping: “Eastern Sierra History: Electricity for Bodie” by Dave Babb.

Unknown newspaper clipping: “Bodie – Continued from page 1.”

Newspaper clipping: *Los Angeles Times*, 17 Aug 2014, p. A15. “Collapsed building, Bodie, Calif.”

Unknown newspaper clipping: “Good Times – An old piano and roulette table in Sam Leon’s bar in Bodie, CA.”

Unknown newspaper clipping: “Eastern Sierra History: The Mystery of Body’s Burial” by Dave Babb. Hand dated Aug 2012.

Unknown newspaper clipping: “Bodie State Historic Park rests in a state of arrested decay.”

Newspaper clipping: *Inyo Register*, 2 Jan 2020, p. 2: “Throwback Thursday – Bodie – the thriving metropolis.”

Post card: Undated color image of main street in Bodie, California. Front and back of card.

Journal article (photocopied): *California History*, Vol. 73, Issue 4, Dec 1994. “Golden Promises, Abandoned Dreams: A Brief History and Portfolio of Photographs of Bodie, California” by Jill A. Lachman.

Unknown periodical clipping: “Famous Bodie – See an Old West Gold-Mining Ghost Town.”

Journal article (photocopied): *California History*, Vol. 73, Issue 4, Dec 1994. “Golden Promises, Abandoned Dreams: A Brief History and Portfolio of Photographs of Bodie, California” (continued) – “Bodie, California – A Portfolio of Photographs” by Jill A. Lachman.

Unknown text document: “A Brief History of Bodie.”

Unknown newspaper clipping (reprinted from the *Sacramento Bee*, hand-dated 14 June 2001): "The Town that lived, died by gold fever – The lure of gold brought all types of folks to the town of Bodie" by Reed Parsell.

Periodical clipping: *Inyo-Mono Outdoor Guide*, 1962 (hand dated): "See Bodie – A Real Ghost Town."

Unknown periodical clipping: Full page photo of rusting car near Bodie's main street.

Website printout: The Eastern Sierra WebPage (mammothweb.com) entry for Bodie, CA.

Unknown periodical clipping: Image of buildings in Bodie.

Unknown newspaper clipping: "Bodie is where the ghost live! […]"

Unknown text document: "Bodie State Historic Park."

Newspaper clipping: *The Washington Post*, 1 Jan 2005: "Bodie: Is Anyone Home?"

Unknown periodical clippings: Images from Bodie. Ad: "Will pay top dollar for any items from Bodie."

Periodical clipping: *Sunset Magazine*, July 2000 (hand dated): "Secrets of Bodie – Guided tours illuminate California's loveliest ghost town" by Lora J. Finnegan.

Newspaper clipping: *Los Angeles Times*, undated: "Spirits of the West – Headless Hooch, roving Annabelle and others keep ghost towns lively." By Hugo Martin.

Unknown periodical clipping: "Rough-and-tumble Bodie, Calif."

Periodical clipping: Photocopy of *The Album: Times and Tale of Inyo-Mono*, Vol. 2, No. 4, Oct 1989. "Bodie – A First-Hand Tale." Stories written and told by Victor Larson. Collected/edited and shared by his daughter Donna S. Strong.

Page with original photographs of Bodie Church; "Victor Larson & Will Owens in Front of Bank Vault After Bodie Fire of 1932."

Page with original document: "Independent Order of Odd Fellows" document for Laetitia Larson; envelope for document addressed from Mila Rebekah Lodge, Bodie to Mrs. Laetitia Larson, Bishop, California, 3 May 1905.

Original document: Rebekah Withdrawal Card for Laetitia Larson, dated 17 Dec 1901, Bodie Independent Order of Odd Fellows/Rebekahs.

Original document: Black and white photograph of Bodie School, with children sitting out front, on balcony, and handing out of upstairs windows. Photo captioned: "Different picture of school on page 149 of 'Bodie's Gold' by Marguerite Sprague 2003."

Original document: Mono County, California document related to the estate of William T. Owens, longtime Bodie resident related by marriage to the Larsons.

Original document: Black and white photograph of the town of Bodie "Taken by Arthur E. Larson about 1900. Grandmother [Arminta Lewellen] Johnson's Lodging House was in West Bodie – In 1956 only the privy remained. The house had been taken to Mono Mills, California."

Original document: Black and white photo of Victor Larson. Corresponds with other known photos of Victor linked to his visits to Bodie in the 1930s. Also includes envelope addressed to William Owens at Bodie.

Original documents: Black and white photos of Victor Larson (left) and William T. Owens at Bodie in 1932 shortly after a fire that burned much of the town. Photo on the right shows them alongside the bank vault and rubble of the bank building.

Document: Page from Bodie Cemetery guidebook, by the Friends of Bodie, detailing Araminta Jane Lewellen Owens Johnson (1828-1905) and Wood Larson (1834-1900). Both are buried in the Bodie Cemetery.

Document: photocopy of a letter from Araminta J. Johnson at Bodie to her sister Sareptha E. Bibb. Letter appears to be written shortly after the death of Sareptha's husband Dooley Bibb on 11 June 1887.

Unknown periodical clippings: Image of the Standard Mill; photo of stove captioned "Bodie State Historic Park hosts photo workshops…"

Unknown periodical clippings: Photo of the end of Bodie's main street with caption "Ghosts of the West"; image and caption of the Miner's Union Hall; map of California showing Bodie's location.

Newspaper clipping: *San Francisco Chronicle*, 2 July 1989. Photo captioned "Bodie's unrestored buildings are propped up to prevent collapse."

Unknown document: "Survey the Ruins of a True Old West Ghost Town."

Periodical clipping: *Out and About Magazine*, November 2011, p. 43-44. "Walking Woman – Bodie, the Ghost Town" by Rosemary Rideout.

Periodical clipping: "2016 Summer Guide." "Features – Bodie or Bust – The 156-year-old ghost town springs to vivid, raucous life during its 29th annual Friends of Bodie Day."

Unknown periodical clipping: Image of the Bodie church alongside other buildings.

Newspaper clipping: *San Francisco Examiner*, 23 Jun 1996, p. T-1. "Goodbye God, We're Going to Bodie."

Original document: Hand drawn sketch for headstone for William T. Owens (1855-1933). Caption below states "Robert Wood Larson Sr. purchased marker in Salinas, California and installed it at Bodie, California"; receipt for headstone from Garden of Memories Memorial Park, Salinas, California to R.W. Larson Sr.

Original documents: Black and white photo of William T. Owens as a young man; color photo of Owens' headstone.

Original documents: Black and white photo of abandoned building in Bodie, captioned along edges, "Araminta Jane's Lodging House – Bodie – on Mill Street – 30 years after abandonment." Bottom photo shows a man [Araminta's grandson Victor Larson?] standing before the same building.

Original document: "Dedication of the Ghost Town of Bodie – September 12, 1964 – 1:30PM – State Historic Park – National Historic Site & State Historical Landmark." Booklet/program detailing events, people involved with the dedication, and other information.

Periodical clipping: *Sierra Life Magazine*, January-February 1984, Vol. 4, Number 1. "Bodie – California's Favorite Ghost Town" by George Williams III.

Periodical clipping: *California History*, June 1988. Photocopy. Three photos of Bodie.

Newspaper clipping: *Mammoth Lakes Review-Herald*, 29 Sep 1988, Preview section p. 20: "Bodie is full of history" and "The Bodie Bar" with text.

Newspaper clipping: *Mammoth Lakes Review-Herald*, 15 Oct 1987, Preview section p. 1: "Tales from a former Bodie Ranger give the 'ghost town' new meaning." Following page has article by former Bodie State Park Ranger Marcia Didtler.

Newspaper clipping: *Wall Street Journal*, 25 Aug 2006 [hand-dated / credited]. "This Old Ruin – A Ghost Town Is Suspended in Time, Thanks to Handyman's Invisible Hand." By George Anders.

Newspaper clipping: *San Francisco Chronicle*, 2 July 1989, This World section, p. 7-8. "Bodie is a museum ghost town…"

Newspaper clipping: *Los Angeles Times*, 1 July 1992, p. E-1. "Boom or Bust? Can the ghost town of Bodie survive another gold rush? Mining companies say yes; opponents say no." By Kathleen Hendrix.

Newspaper clipping: *The Californian* (Salinas CA), 4 July 1989, p. 3: "Miners Come Back to Haunt Bodie."

Newspaper clipping: *San Francisco Examiner*, 16 Dec 1994, p. A-23. "Dan Noyes: The ghosts of Bodie can rest in peace."

Newspaper clipping: *Mono Herald,* 1 Mar 1984, p. 10: "Gold bars poured at the Standard Mine in Bodie…"

Periodical clipping: 2016 Scenic 395, p. 54: Article on Bodie State Park.

Periodical clipping: *Welcome to the Eastern Sierra*, Summer Events Guide 2015, p. 30. "A Town Frozen in Time."

Original document: Envelope addressed to Mr. R.W. Larson Jr of Salinas, California. Return address "Ghost Town of Bodie."

Periodical clipping: *American Profile Magazine*, hand dated 19 February 2011. "On the Job – Ghost Town Guardian – Mark Langner keeps watch over Old West history" by Audrey T. Hingley.

Unknown periodical clippings: "To preserve the ghost town atmosphere […]"; "Designated as a National Historic Site…"

Unknown periodical clippings: "Visit the Historic Bodie Victorian Hotel."

Periodical clipping: *Sierra Life Magazine*, January – February 1985, Vol. 5, No. 1, p. 56-57. "The First Motorized Funeral in Bodie."

Periodical clipping: *California History*, Vol. 70, 1991, p. 414: "Cursed by isolation, brutal winter weather…"

Periodical clipping: *Motorland*, July-August 1964, p. 14-16. "Goodbye, God! I'm going to Bodie."

Unknown periodical clipping: "The Spirit of Bodie – A Walking Tour of the Ghost Town."

Newspaper clipping: *San Francisco Chronicle*, 24 June 2002, p. A1: "Ghost town honorific haunts Legislature – Bodie, Calico vie for state designation," by Mark Martin.

Newspaper clipping: *San Francisco Chronicle*, 21 Aug 2002, p. A2: "Ghost town debate ends in a draw – Assembly compromise gives dual titles to rugged Bodie, tourist mecca Calico."

Periodical clipping: Photocopy of *The Album: Times and Tale of Inyo-Mono*, July 1988, Vol. 1, No. 3. "Bodie Electrifies the World" by Barbara Moore.

Unknown newspaper clipping: "Bodie Ghost Town."

Periodical clipping: *Open Air*, Fall 2005, p. 16. "Pioneer Spirit – Bodie, Last Real Ghost Town in the West!" by Suzanne Nottingham.

Periodical clipping: *Sunset magazine*, (c. 1993). "Bodie – Even a ghost needs friends." By Lora J. Finnegan.

Website printout. Unknown website. “March, 2009 – The Bad Man from Bodie: A Frontier Legend Rediscovered” by Michael H. Piatt.

Original document: Laminated sign reading “To help keep out flies and other insects.. PLEASE LOWER THE LID AND CLOSE THE DOOR.” [Possible lavatory / restroom sign from Bodie State Park?]

Unknown document: Promotional information page (website printout?) regarding the 2005 book *The Bad Man from Bodie: The Violent Death of John Franklin* by Joseph P. Bowman.

Newspaper clipping: *Mono Herald*, 25 Dec 1980, p. 25: “Christmas in Bodie 1898.”

Unknown periodical clipping: “Bodie – Ghost town frozen in time.”

Periodical clipping: *National Geographic*, Sep 2016. “United States – In Bodie, California, abandoned buildings and a rusted-out 1937 Chevy glow eerily…”

Unknown document/clipping: “Take an Unforgettable Trip into the Past” by Don Quilici.

Newspaper clipping: *The Sheet*, 23 July 2016, p. 10. “Fire in the Head! Bodie’s Brewery Past” by Bodine.

Unknown newspaper clipping, hand dated 3 January 2015. “Exactly who was the Bad Man from Bodie?”

Newspaper clipping: *Inyo Register*, 2 Sep 2017, p. 5. “Photographers take night tour of Bodie.”

Newspaper clipping: *Inyo Register*, 11 Mar 2017, p. 2: “Rebirth of a fearfully and wonderfully bad place – Stunning new work revives the history of America’s favorite ghost town: Bodie.” Review of book about Bodie.

Original document: “A Walk in Old Bodie” – hand dated 1964. California Department of Parks and Recreation tour guide / booklet to Bodie, California shortly after it had opened as a state park.

Original document: “Bodie State Historic Park.” 1988 guidebook / pamphlet. California State Park System.

Newspaper clipping: *Mammoth Review-Herald*, 12 Nov 1987, p. 22. “Archaeologist explores historic site – Mills provided Bodie with thousands of cords of wood” by Jeff Irens.

Unknown periodical clipping: “The Life of a Ghost Town.”

Unknown periodical clipping: Promotional materials about Bodie, monocounty.org listed at bottom of the page.

Unknown periodical clipping: “Bodie is still alive.” Hand dated 2013.

Unknown periodical clipping: “Bodie State Historic Park.”

Unknown periodical clipping: “Get Out Into the Bodie Hills” by Paul McFarland. States that article was originally published in Friends of the Inyo’s *Jeffrey Pine Journal*, Fall 2014.

Unknown periodical clipping: “Historic Bodie; A View Into the Past” by Cheryl McDonald.

Periodical clipping: *Westways Magazine*, Sep 2015, p. 18. “Opening Scene – Haunting Images.”

Periodical photocopy: *Fremontia*, July 1983, p. 21-23. “Common and Rare Plants of the Bodie Hills” by Tim Messick.

Unknown newspaper clipping: Hand dated 30 Jul 2009 [possibly *Inyo Register*]. “Ranger’s quick thinking saves historic state park – Lightning strike and subsequent fire [witnessed] by ranger at Bodie.” BLM ranger Eric Keefer acted quickly following a lightning strike fire in Bodie on 15 July 2009.

Newspaper article: *Wall Street Journal*, hand dated 11 Aug 2011. “Gold Fever Stirs Ghost Town” by Justin Scheck.

Document: Poster advertising 2015 Bodie Day at Bodie State Historic Park, 8 Aug 2015.

Periodical clipping: *Jeffrey Pine Journal*, Vol VIII, Issue I, 2011. “Get Out! – Befriending the Bodie Hills” by Jack Shipley.

Periodical clipping: *Jeffrey Pine Journal,* hand dated 2021. “Waterways and Restoration in the Bodies” by Jora Fogg.

Periodical clipping: *Jeffrey Pine Journal,* Vol. IX, Issue II [hand dated Winter 2011-2012]. “Preservation – Bodie Hills Hold Strong” by Drew Foster.

Unknown periodical clipping: “Where and How to Get Out on the Eastside this Summer – ‘You can hike in the Bodie Hills?’” by Drew Foster. Hand dated 2012.

Document: Bodie Cemetery guide. Undated. Provides information about the lives and deaths of those buried at Bodie’s cemetery.

Document: Bodie State Historic Park pamphlet. Hand dated 1979. Provides information about the people, buildings, and events of Bodie. Intended for use during a walking tour.